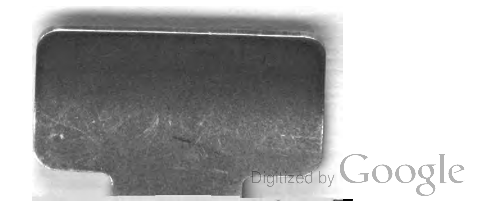




NARRATIVE,

&c.

NARRATIVE

OF AN

EXPEDITION FROM TRIPOLI

IN BARBARY,

TO THE

WESTERN FRONTIER OF EGYPT,

IN 1817,

BY THE BEY OF TRIPOLI;

IN LETTERS TO DR. VIVIANI OF GENOA,

BY

PAOLO DELLA CELLA, M.D.

PHYSICIAN ATTENDANT ON THE BEY:

WITH AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING INSTRUCTIONS FOR NAVIGATING THE

GREAT SYRTIS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN,

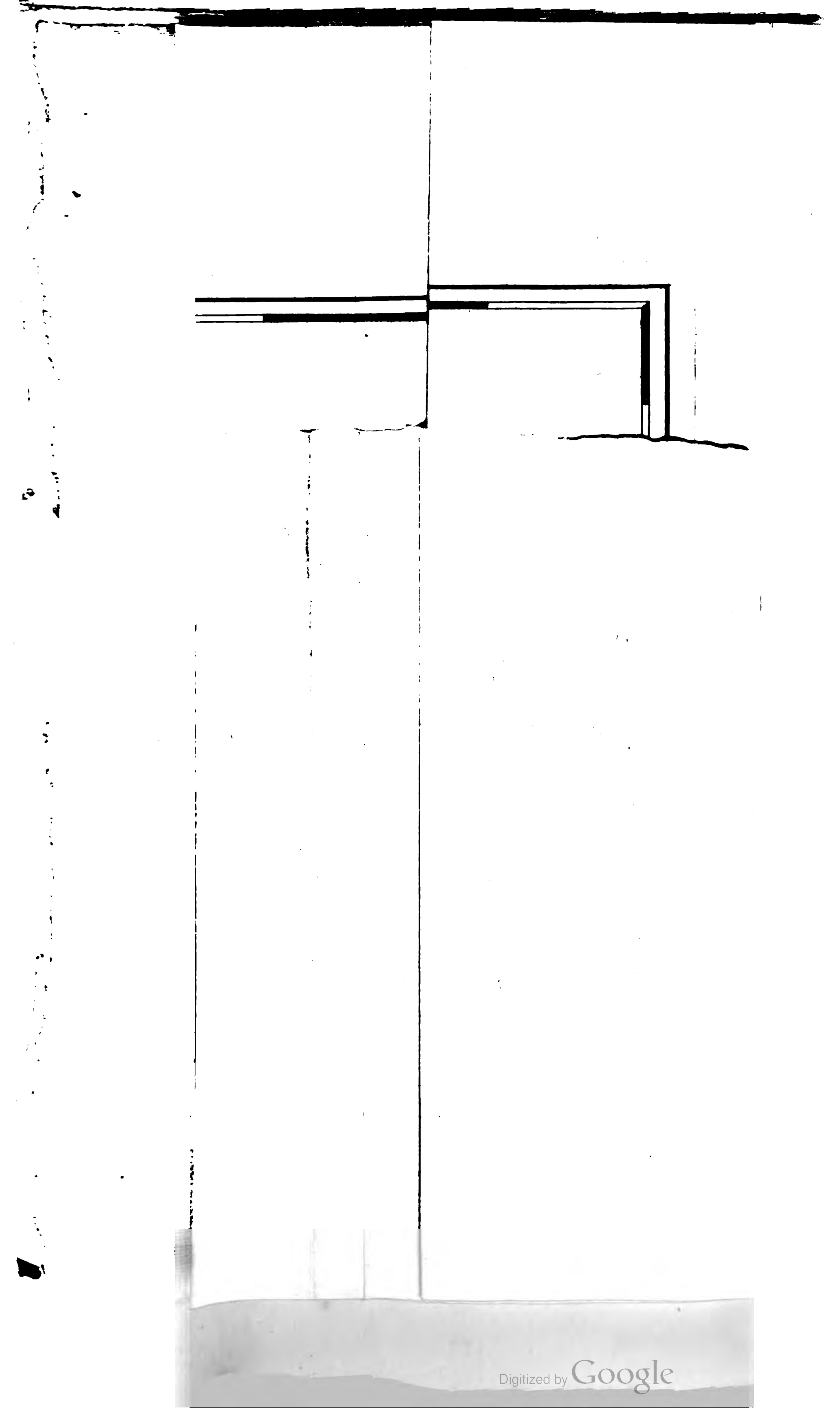
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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

During my residence at Tripoli, upon a visit to the Sardinian consul-general, I watched for a favourable opportunity of exploring that part of the coast which stretches from Tripoli along the borders of the great Syrtis, and across the country of Cyrene to the western frontier of Egypt. To this enterprize I was particularly excited, by considering that the omissions and defects in the geographical notices of that long tract of the north coast of Africa, require to be supplied and corrected; that the vast gulph of the Syrtis, which protrudes itself so far into the interior, must be abundantly fertile in novelty and natural phenomena; and that the Cyrenaica

was well calculated, by the descriptions of the ancients, to awaken and gratify curiosity; for there was the district so famed for the production of the *Silphium*,[a] ("herb, "whence cometh Benzoin"): there the earth annually yielded triple harvests, and the most delicious fruits:[b] there flourished the garden of the Hesperides;[c] and there too were the seats of the blessed, fanned by the tepid breezes of an eternal spring.[d]

At length, an armed force, dispatched along the coast by the Pacha of Tripoli, afforded me the desired opportunity with apparent safety; and I now offer to the public the results of my observations, in the epistolary form in which they were originally written, and for which I had a peculiar inducement. For, surrounded by barbarians, and constrained to an almost uninterrupted intercourse with them during the

[a] Strabo de Situ Orbis, lib. xvii. Scil. Perip. Ptol. Geograph.

[b] Herodotus, Hist. lib. iv.

[c] Strabo, loc. cit. Scil. Perip. loc. cit.

[d] Herodotus, loc. cit.

day, I relieved my mind, upon entering my tent in the evening, by thus communicating my remarks to the learned professor Viviani, to whom I knew they would be acceptable, and who had earnestly invited me to do so. To his counsels I have deemed it right to sacrifice all personal adventures, as incompatible with an instructive journey unless where they tend to explain the character and customs of a nation. As far as circumstances permitted, I have endeavoured to place before the reader the nature, aspect, and productions of the countries I visited; and I have deposited in the museum of the university of Genoa, specimens of the various soils, with a view of augmenting the geological knowledge of that part of Africa.

The sandy, scorched, and shifting soil of the great desert affords a very scanty harvest of plants, but among them are some of uncommon forms and great rarity; and the *Lotus* and the *Silphium* alone suffice to ennoble a *Flora Cyrenaica.* My collection

is now in the hands of Professor Viviani, who purposes publishing a "*Specimen Floræ Libicæ,*" as soon as the difficulties that attend ascertaining the character of dried plants, so accurately as to figure and describe them, can be surmounted. To him likewise am I indebted for the critical and erudite illustrations of ancient geography, interspersed in their appropriate places, in my letters, as well as for the historical account of certain plants, and other natural productions, which were holden in great esteem in past ages, but are either forgotten or not known at present.

In the map annexed to the letters I have not presumed to fix with precision the relative positions of the places I visited; for besides that I had no means of ascertaining them with exactitude; the itinerary measures which might in part have supplied the defect, were more than commonly uncertain, on account of the road continually winding among deep and trackless sands. But as the best maps of this part of Africa,

however correct as to the form and direction of the coast, do not afford any good idea of its physical state, and are sometimes defective in marking the direction of the mountains, I have attempted in my narrative to remedy their deficiencies, by exactly pointing out the bearings of the mountains, together with the nature of the country, whether sandy, woody, or cultivated, the existence of water, whether in springs or wells, and such other particularities as tend to furnish positive and precise information of that portion of the globe.

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NARRATIVE,

&c.

LETTER I.

FROM TRIPOLI TO THE VILLAGES OF TAGIURA.

Nature of the country—character and atrocious conduct of the eldest son of the Pacha of Tripoli—object of an expedition against him, under the Bey his brother—composition of the army—march—encampment—night-watch.

NOT a day has passed since I reached Tripoli without thinking of procuring for you such plants, minerals, and other objects of natural history, as might convince you that absence and distance have not extinguished in your scholar, either the love of science or the grateful remembrance of his teachers. But my wishes have not yet met with the gratification I had promised my-

self, while ignorant of the local peculiarities which have impeded it. Tripoli is situated upon a coast, where the mineralogist finds nothing to examine but sand, and where the vegetation of wild plants is either checked by long drought, or destroyed by tillage. A few miles from the town, the country is infested by wandering tribes of Arab Bedouins; and to be pillaged by them is the slightest evil to which they who fall in with them are exposed. The flourishing cities formerly scattered over the plains of Libya are now deserted and in ruins; and a population not exceeding thirty thousand souls is all that is to be found stationary at Tagiura, Sliten, Mesurata, Bengasi, and Derna, along a line of coast extending nine hundred miles from Tripoli to the gulph of Bomba. In the immeasurable deserts connected with the great Syrtis, safety is to be found only in solitude; but though solitude may preserve the traveller from assassination, it exposes him to the dreadful evils of thirst and famine. In the interior, not a single roof rises over any portion of the vast surface of the Pentapolis; nor is there any place of repose during the night, except under

the tent of a Bedouin; but though the patriarchal descent of these Arabs has procured them a great reputation for hospitality, the life of many a traveller, who expected to find in these miscreants the hereditary virtues of Abraham and of Isaac, has been sacrificed to this romantic notion.

If you examine the map of Africa, published by Arrowsmith, who has pointed out the track of those who have visited that quarter of the globe, you will observe that some have travelled from Egypt to Tripoli by Fezzan; and that others, adventuring themselves from Tripoli upon the great desert, have attempted the route to Tombuctoo, or have bent their course towards the banks of the Nile; but that no one has hitherto turned towards the Pentapolis and the classic ground of Cyrene and of Barca. Such an exploit seems to have been reserved for me, and I hope to visit the deserted shores of the tempestuous Syrtis, and enable you to give the botanical world a *Flora Libica,* without any fear of my falling under the poniard of a Bedouin, or perishing for want of provisions; ten thousand armed men will protect me from the former, and numerous droves of

camels will convey the means of avoiding the latter. You will shudder at the cause of this expedition; but out of an evil which I cannot obviate, something favourable to literature and science may arise; and I hasten to relieve you from the suspense which this last paragraph may have occasioned.

Among all the monsters generated by Africa, which by the ancients was denominated the country of monsters, the first place is due to Mhamet Karamalli, eldest son of the present Pacha of Tripoli; of intellect the most obtuse and impenetrable; of mind the most grovelling and unenlightened; and of disposition the most brutal; unbridled in the gratification of the most atrocious passions, there is no cruelty with which he is not stained, no violence which he has not committed; and one of his choicest pleasures was to watch the convulsive motions, comparative sufferings, and dying agonies of some of his slaves, to whom he occasionally caused graduated doses of arsenic to be administered. This savage having been employed by his father, at the head of a small army, to reduce to obedience a tribe of Bedouins who had in-

fested the shores of the gulph, ravaged the adjoining districts, and (*proh nefas!*) refused to pay the customary tribute, he so fully executed the commission, that not a single one of the whole tribe remained alive.

Upon his return to Tripoli, elated with the success of his sanguinary expedition, and accustomed to the most implicit and blind obedience to his orders; he no longer treated his father with respect, but in one of his many sallies of passion struck at him with a poniard, which was fortunately warded off by a female slave. Instead of punishing him as he deserved, and depriving him of the means of further aggression, his father sent him out as governor of the provinces of Bengasi and Derna, upon the eastern frontier of his territories, inhabited by a powerful tribe of Bedouins, called Zoasi, long ill affected towards the Pacha, and frequently breaking out into open rebellion. But no sooner was the new governor arrived at Bengasi, than the Pacha found that in his son he had given a chieftain to the malcontents; and the rebellion spreading rapidly throughout those provinces, the Pacha judged it expedient to dispatch a considerable body of troops,

under the command of his second son, Bey Ahmet, in order to check the progress of the insurrection, and punish the treacherous conduct of the rebellious son.

Bey Ahmet having, from a degree of caution very rare among those of his faith, desired that a physician might attend him upon the expedition, the Pacha, to whom my profession was known, earnestly requested the Sardinian Consul to offer me that appointment; and the Consul being acquainted with my views and wishes, the more readily yielded to the Pacha's solicitations, and found me eager to accede to the proposal.

You will doubtless be desirous of knowing in what manner these barbarians collect an army, what is the nature of its discipline, and what are the means of subsisting it, during a long march, through a country either totally depopulated or only inhabited by a few wandering tribes; and it may be useful to others, to be made acquainted with the resources of such an uncivilized government under similar circumstances.

The Pacha had no sooner determined upon proceeding with military force against his rebellious son, than he issued orders to

all the chiefs of the Bedouin tribes in his dominions, to furnish a number of soldiers proportioned to their population, who were to join the Bey at the points upon his march the nearest to their districts; and the chiefs themselves were ordered to repair to Tripoli, to be provided with tents and receive their colours from the hands of their sovereign. These colours are all alike, except those of the Marabouts and the Scheriffs, who have the privilege of hoisting the green flag of the Prophet; the former as a class in great odour of sanctity, the latter as claiming their descent from the family of Mahomet.

Five days before our departure, the Pacha's standard was displayed, a ceremony amounting to a solemn declaration of war; tents were pitched under the walls of the fortress; preparations were made for the march; and Bey Ahmet, commander in chief of the expedition, was employed in visiting and consulting all the Marabouts in the town, and in recommending himself to their earnest prayers and enchantments.

11*th Feb.* 1817.

This day we quitted Tripoli, and the

Pacha accompanied his son about twelve miles along the coast to the plain of Tagiura, where a camp had already been formed. Several bodies of troops having previously repaired to the camp, our number on leaving the capital did not exceed five hundred, consisting of the Bey's general staff, his Mamelukes, black slaves, and other persons of his household; and the army is not expected to be complete until we reach the gulph of the great desert, where the population is more considerable.

The women in all the villages upon our march appeared at the doors of their houses, and set up a guttural sort of howl, which sounded like "lu, lu, lu," and lasted as long as we were in sight; and those in the fields hastening to join in chorus, they produced a symphony not unlike that which issues on a summer evening from a marsh well stocked with frogs. I was told that with this ceremony the women of the country are bound to welcome the return of their husbands, and celebrate their sovereign's passage near their habitations.

After two hours' march, we halted for the night at the camp before Tagiura, the appearance of which could not but create

in every European the most sovereign contempt for the military establishment of these barbarians; for there was no sort of order in their movements, no uniformity in their arms or clothing, and nothing was in unison but an excessive display of poverty and an air of perfect incapacity. The soldier, armed with a wretched firelock, and a still worse pair of pistols, was clad in a tattered woollen cloak; two pieces of camel's hide, dried in the sun, and fastened across the soles of his feet with a string, supplied the place of shoes; and from his waist-belt hung three bags, severally containing powder, balls, and wadding. What more indeed could be expected from a soldier, who is forced to subsist himself, and to furnish his own arms and clothing, and whose enrolment among the Pacha's troops authorizes him to live at free cost in the countries he traverses, and to lay his hands upon every thing within his reach? When such an army as this is destined to cross the deserts, five or six of these men unite in the purchase of a camel, for the conveyance of their baggage and provisions; the latter consist of barley for their horses, and of barley-meal for themselves, which they

make into dough, and rolling it into little balls, swallow them without sauce or cookery. Their baggage is composed of a mat of palm leaves, upon which they sleep; of a skin called *Gherba*, for carrying water; and of a small wooden pail, called *Gassa*, whose uses are very numerous, for it serves them for kneading their barley-meal into dough, as a dish to eat out of, as a bucket to wash their linen in, and as a trough for their horses and camels to drink out of.

Towards evening some inhabitants of the neighbouring villages came to the camp, with a day's provisions for the troops, consisting of hard cakes of dough, seasoned with oil, honey, and pepper-pods called *Basina*, the use of which, either whole or in powder like pepper, is universal among the inhabitants of Barbary. Perhaps their constant use of unbaked cakes and balls of this dough renders such a stimulant necessary to promote digestion; but its long continuance exhausts the powers of the stomach, and frequently causes diseases in the bladder.

The first night I passed in the camp of these barbarians, every thing was so new to me, that I am tempted to give you a

brief description of an arrangement, which was every day invariably the same. The tents are disposed in a semicircular form, the entrance of the encampment being always in the direction of the route which the army is to take. In the centre of the semicircle is the Bey's tent; near it are those of his physician and his *Kasnadar* or chief officer of the household; then follow the tents of his guards, composed of Mamelukes and negroes; and behind them, but forming a much deeper semicircle, are those of his other troops. The interval between the two horns of the half moon is occupied by the Bey's horses, by two of the Pacha's standards, and by eight bronze pieces of artillery, mounted upon most clumsy and unwieldy carriages; between the Pacha's standards are displayed two immense banners of the Prophet, constantly guarded by two Scheriffs, and between the banners is fixed the staff of authority. This symbol of sovereignty is sent by the Grand Signor to the Pacha, and is considered as conveying an emanation of the supreme power of the Sublime Porte. Whenever any adventurer succeeds in overturning the government of a Pacha, and usurping his power

and title, the Grand Signor hastens to send him the staff of authority, in order that notwithstanding his incapacity to depose him, the long established notion, that the exercise of the sovereign power can proceed only from the Porte, may remain in undisputed force. Any malefactor, be his crime what it may, who can contrive to reach and touch this staff, is safe from punishment. The Scheriffs, who constantly hoist the banners of the Prophet near it, may be considered as the last symbols of the exterior display of that dependence upon the Sublime Porte, which the Barbary powers still continue to acknowledge. The Janissaries, who form a part of the Grand Signor's troops, and are kept by him in the service of the Pacha, were originally instituted with the prudent view of preventing any other force but that of the state from being established by the dependents upon the head of the Ottoman empire; but the reins of that government are now too feeble to act with effect at such a distance, and even sometimes fall from the hands of the Grand Signor in his very capital.

The night-watch in the camp is performed in a clamorous and disagreeable manner;

for after a gun has been fired, an officer, called *Sciaus*, at the tent which forms one of the horns of the half moon, loudly exclaims "*Balich oh*" (take care), which is repeated from the adjoining tent, and thus runs along the whole semicircle, till it reaches the *Sciaus* at the opposite extremity, who in his turn sends it back to the former; and this troublesome noise is thus uninterruptedly kept up throughout the night. Amid these fatiguing clamours I finish this letter, reserving for my next a description of the surrounding country.

LETTER II.

FROM THE VILLAGES OF TAGIURA TO LEBDA.

Country and its productions—palm tree—wine—Marabouts—Bedouins—hawking—temperature—ancient Leptis magna—*old geographers—Capt. Smith—medical treatment of the Bey's brother-in-law.*

The neighbourhood of the capital seems to hold out such a promise of security to property, that the inhabitants of the plain between Tripoli and Cape Tagiura have been induced to make it the theatre of their rural industry. It is a tract of coast about twelve miles in length and three in breadth, bounded to the south by shifting sands, which divide it from the last ramifications of the mountains of Goriano. These mountains, the first which present themselves to the mariner's view as he approaches Tripoli by sea, rise about a long day's journey from that city, and, together with the copious

dews peculiar to the climate, supply the moisture necessary for the vegetation of the cultivated tract between Tripoli and Cape Tagiura. This rugged and precipitous range is then seen stretching out from the south-west towards the east, and rising to the height of about five hundred metres[a] above the level of the Mediterranean. These mountains, and the villages of Goriano and Tavarga, situated upon their flanks, are the hereditary property of the Pacha's second son, and produce a vast quantity of sena leaves *(Cassia sena, Linn.)* and saffron.

The country on this side of Tripoli, as also the plains of Tagiura, abound with palm trees, whose bare and rough stems, spreading tops and pointed leaves, have at first something unpleasant to a European eye, but are quite in harmony with the parched and rugged aspect of the country, and furnish the natives with the principal part of their subsistence. Without requiring any particular care in the cultivation, the delicate fruit of the palm tree equalizes

[a] A metre is three feet and one inch, French measure.

the tables of the rich and of the poor, and is peculiarly favourable to their love of idleness. Its fruit in this part of Africa is not however so delicious as that in the environs of Tunis, which in its turn yields to that in the Fezzan, but little known in Europe. When the bud, which annually puts forth from the crown of the palm tree, is cut off, there distils from the incision a frothy liquor, called *Laghibi,* which, when immediately drunk off, is extremely palatable; but when kept for some time, ferments and forms a strong intoxicating sort of wine, in great request among the Mahometans, notwithstanding the prohibitions in the Coran. The use of this wine in countries where the palm tree flourishes is of very ancient date; for we read in Herodotus,[a] that among the presents sent by Cambyses to the Æthiopians, through the intervention of the *Icthyophagi,* was "a vessel containing palm-tree wine;" and I am inclined to think, that the liquor resembling Must, "extracted from a certain flower, and exclusively set apart as the beverage of the kings of the Troglodytes in Arabia," was also extracted from that

[a] Herod. lib. xi. 20.

tree.[a] When the palm tree has undergone the above operation, it bears no fruit during the next three years; but that which it then produces is of a more delicate nature. Among the plantations of palm trees around Tripoli are many delightful gardens, full of lemon and orange trees, and protected by thick and impenetrable fences of India fig-trees; but except oranges, all other sorts of fruit at Tripoli are scarce, and far inferior to ours.

Olive trees, with leaves of a much darker green than the European, abound upon these plains, and the oil obtained from their fruit is exquisitely fine, in spite of the ignorance displayed in making it. Fragments of magnificent granite columns from the ruins of Lebda *(Leptis magna)*, are employed in grinding the olives; and upon that account only, are those venerable remains of antiquity held in any estimation by these barbarians.

Tagiura contains about three thousand inhabitants, chiefly Moors and Jews, whose houses are dispersed in groupes over the plain, and who are engaged in agriculture and the manufacture of coarse camlets and

[a] Agatharcis Peripl. Mar. Rubr. p. 45.

mats of palm-tree leaves. As soon as we entered these hamlets, the Bey and his suite paid a visit to the Marabout who was most in odour of sanctity; and as these Marabouts will frequently appear upon the stage, it is expedient that I should give you a sketch of them and of their manners.

In order to belong to this privileged class, it is requisite to have only one wife, to drink no wine or spirits, and to know how to read the Coran well or ill; and in a country where incontinence and intemperance are so prevalent, and literature is so entirely unknown, it is not surprising that these men should easily gain credit with the public; but this credit is much augmented if the Marabout is skilled in such tricks as are calculated to impose upon the vulgar. The least crafty among them will continue shaking their heads and arms so violently during several hours, that they frequently fall down in a swoon; others remain perfectly motionless, in attitudes the most whimsical and painful; and many of these impostors have the talent of captivating the confidence and good opinion of the multitude, by pretending to perform miracles in the public streets. This trade descends from father to son, and

is so lucrative, that the most fertile parts of the country swarm with these knavish hypocrites. When they die, the neighbouring tribes erect a sort of mausoleum to their memory, consisting of a square tower, surmounted by a cupola of the most fantastical architecture. To these tombs, called likewise Marabouts, the devout repair in crowds, and are accosted by the deceased through the organs of his surviving representatives, who dwell within the walls of the tower, and artfully contrive to increase the holy reputation of their predecessor as well as their own profits. The walls of these tombs are covered with votive tablets, and offerings to the deceased, consisting of fire-arms, saddles, bridles, stirrups, and baskets of fruit, which no profane hand is allowed to touch, because the departed saint may choose to appropriate the contents to his own use, and by emptying the basket, acquire fresh claims to the veneration of the credulous. The Bey never failed to alight, and devoutly visit every Marabout upon the march; but with this difference in the effect, that he went empty-handed, and returned with a present. Some of these jugglers accompany the army, take part in the Bey's coun-

cils, feed him with promises of victory, make the camp the scene of their mummeries and impostures, and deal in amulets, containing mystic words, written in characters which none but the Marabout who disposes of them can decypher. According to the price of these amulets, they have respectively the power of shielding the wearer from a poniard, a musket-shot, and a cannon-ball; and there is not a soldier in our army who does not always wear one or more of them round his neck, as well as hang them round that of his horse or camel. Miraculous indeed is said to be the efficacy of their written characters in cases of sickness; but the presence of the Marabout himself is necessary in order that the writing may suit the nature of the disorder. When the disease is dangerous, the writing is administered internally, for which purpose they scrawl some words in large characters, with thick streaks of ink round the inside of a cup, dissolve the ink with broth, and with many devout ceremonies pour the liquor down the sick person's throat. It is generally thought that a white woman, one of the Pacha's wives, was lately hurried out of the world by the quantity of ink

thus given to her by a Marabout. These impostors have always free access to the Pacha, and in public audiences never kiss his hand, but his shoulder; a token of distinction and confidence granted only to relations and persons of importance.

12th Feb.

Quitting the villages at half-past six in the morning, we proceeded along the coast, and after a seven hours' march, reached the small torrent of Uadi-Msit, which gives its name to this maritime district, descends from the Goriano mountains, and throws itself into the sea. Its course is from south to north; its margin is destitute of verdure, and its waters flow over a muddy bottom.

Towards evening we encamped about half an hour's march from the torrent, and were joined by some Bedouins belonging to the tribes who feed their flocks in the adjacent districts. Their chiefs, accompanied by a Marabout, and followed by their recruits, presented themselves before the Bey, and marched briskly several times round him, with the butt-ends of their firelocks turned towards him, and with loud and repeated acclamations. The Bey re-

ceived them with uplifted hands; and, finally, prayers were alternately recited by them and the Marabout. These Bedouins are dressed in camlet, wear a white cap upon their heads, and are armed with a musket and a match-lock pistol.

13th Feb.

We marched during several hours across an immense plain, called Turot, wholly destitute of trees, but covered with thick grass, and verdant pastures most grateful to the eye. It is terminated to the south by the chain of Goriano mountains, whose lateral ridges project into the plain, and are intersected by valleys rich in pasture-grounds, and well inhabited by Bedouins. If the rural industry of these people were supported and encouraged by the government, these plains and pastures might always be kept fresh by the moisture from the hills, and rendered incredibly fertile; and the torrents which flow from the mountains might be collected into proper channels, and directed across the plains, instead of losing their waters, as they now do, in this soft and sandy soil. In consequence of this neglect, the traveller is obliged to have re-

course to wells, some of which we found near the sea, of considerable depth, and long since excavated in the sandstone. The water they contain is brackish, but so indeed is all the water upon the Tripoline coast; and I incline to think, that no other would suit the palate of its inhabitants.

While traversing this plain, I saw upon an eminence to the south-east, and about four hours' walk from the sea, an ancient fort, surrounded by vines, producing the most delicious grapes, from which, if the natives were industrious, such wine might be made as would tempt the most rigid Mahometan to transgress, and amply reward the cultivator: but the neglect of such an advantage is less owing to the prohibitions in the Coran, than to the exceeding sloth and ignorance of the people.

The heat beginning to be troublesome soon after noon, we encamped at a place called Sidi-Abdelati, situated among some hills which rise near the sea; and from the Bedouins of that and the adjacent villages, we expected also to be supplied with the customary provisions for the army.

The remainder of the day was passed in hawking, the favourite diversion of the Bey.

The bird employed in that sport is here called *Thiur*, and is the *Falco peregrinus* of the naturalist. Great pains are taken in dressing it, and the few that arrive at perfection are in great esteem, and of such value among the Bedouins, that a camel is frequently given in exchange for a single bird. It appears from the romances of the lower and middle ages, that this entertaining sport was much in vogue in chivalrous times, and was probably introduced into Spain by the Moors, and thus spread over Europe; but it could never have been generally adopted, as it required three things of difficult attainment—an excellent horse, a thorough-bred falcon, and a champaign country.

In the evening, several bodies of armed Bedouins from the neighbouring hills and valleys joined the camp, with colours flying, and to the sound of festive hymns, which were first chaunted by the chieftains, and repeated in chorus by their followers. I could not reflect, without surprise, upon the alacrity with which these hordes of people, wandering among the solitudes of the desert, without laws, and without coercive measures, hastened at the first notice

to join the banners of their prince. The Bey received them with the greatest affability, and seemed to take every method of demonstrating how much he was gratified by their loyalty.

14th Feb.

I suffered considerably from cold in my tent during the night; at five this morning the thermometer of Réaumur was only at four degrees above the freezing point. The preceding day it stood, in the shade, at sixteen degrees, and this great difference between the temperature of the day and that of the night, is a characteristic feature in the climate of the Barbary coasts, and the reason why its mean temperature is so very little above that of Genoa. The coldness of the night must be ascribed to the currents of air from the north, which sweeping over the whole surface of the Mediterranean, and absorbing in their progress a great quantity of moisture, must necessarily counterbalance the rarefied air of these coasts, and inundate them with dew. At Genoa there is a certain equilibrium between the atmosphere of the Appennines, when heated by the sun during the day,

and the volume of air which it warms during its decline; so that in summer, unless any sudden changes take place, the temperature of the night differs scarcely one degree from that of the day; but here the thermometer often rises in the day-time to twenty degrees, and during the succeeding night the ground is covered with a hoar frost as white as snow.

At seven in the morning we recommenced our march, over stony hills deeply furrowed by torrents, but frequently exhibiting pleasant spots, planted with palm and olive trees, among which, in wild luxuriance grew the vine, neglected by the inhabitants, except at the season when the grapes are ripe. This district, called Sibi, is rather populous. Upon some high grounds to the south are the ruins of several ancient fortresses; and near the road are the remains of arches, and of deep wells, excavated in the sandstone, some of which are of great antiquity, if we may judge by the beautiful marble and the great number of basins with which those near Lebda are still adorned and provided. Here we were met by six Marabouts, who with colours flying and fifes and bagpipes playing, were

come down to honour the passage of the Bey, round whom they danced and capered, endeavouring to testify their joy by the strangest attitudes and most unseemly contortions.

Turning towards the north, and descending the hills, Lebda, the *Leptis magna* of antiquity, presented itself before us, and we encamped near its ruins, half an hour's distance from the sea. The remains of that ancient city are scattered along that part of the coast which is terminated to the west and south by the northern and maritime extremities of the Mesalata mountains, and extends eastward far beyond the town of Mesurata, forming a vast plain, covered with palm and olive trees. To the west, the mountains of Mesalata rise precipitously over Lebda, crowned with the ruins of an ancient fortress; and to the south, beyond a narrow plain, runs a considerable chain of hills, about one hundred metres high, and gradually declining towards the shore. Their appearance is rugged and stony, and they are wholly uncultivated and deserted; but a very little industry would suffice to cover them with olive trees and vineyards, which the climate, the quality of the soil,

and a favourable aspect, would speedily render abundantly productive.

Of *Leptis magna* nothing now appears except some shapeless ruins scattered about and half buried under the mounds of sand, which the wind and sea mutually strive to accumulate upon the sea shores. They consist of the remains of magnificent edifices, dilapidated towers, fallen and shattered columns of red granite, broken capitals, and fragments of every species of marble, among which the Parian, the Pentelic, and the Oriental porphyry are the most conspicuous, and are particularly worthy of admiration. This city is known to have been founded in remote ages by the Phenicians, and long afterwards to have been a Roman colony. In such a heap of ruins I cannot presume to point out any vestiges of Phenician Lebda; but those of Roman origin are sufficiently denoted by the style of architecture, and the ornaments of the capitals; and it is reasonable to suppose that those conquerors, well pleased with a city which had been eager to declare in their favour, and inviolably adhered to them during the vicissitudes of the Jugurthan war,[a]

[a] Sallust, Bell. Jug.

would embellish it with splendid edifices, and preserve but few monuments of its former independence.

The positions of the ancient towns upon this part of the African coast seem to have been strangely confounded by such early writers as have mentioned them; nor is it possible from the ruins scattered over it, to fix with precision the situation of either *Neapolis, Gaffara,* or *Abrotanus.* I am disposed to think that the Tripoli of the ancient geographer is to be found in some ruins to the west of Tripoli, still called old Tripoli; and it appears that the desertion of that town, arising from a cause now unknown, gave rise to the foundation of that which now bears its name, and was at that period called Tripoli the new, or the New City, and by the Greeks denominated Νεαπολις. In this opinion I am strengthened by the true reading of Ptolemy, "Νεαπολις η και Τριπολις," or Neapolis, also called Tripoli. I say the *true* reading of Ptolemy, because I have no faith in that adopted by Cellarius, which, substituting Λεπτις for Τριπολις, gives rise to mistakes and confusion. Ptolemy's version is supported by Pliny, who speaks of *Neapolis* and *Leptis magna* as two different towns, and fixes

Gaffara and *Abrotanus* between them; and his testimony, as to the geography of this part of Africa, is certainly entitled to credit. And even though *Leptis* might at some period or other have assumed the name of *Neapolis*, it is sufficiently proved by Sallust, as well as by the coins of its founders, that by the Phenicians it was called *Leptis;* and that it so continued to be called, is testified by the medals of Augustus, Tiberius, and Agrippina, as well as by others which were struck posterior to the existence of those very geographers, who without any foundation, had insisted upon its being the same as *Neapolis.* Neither am I embarrassed by a passage in Strabo, who after speaking of *Abrotanus,* which, according to him, lay to the west of Tripoli, adds, that very near to it was *Neapolis,* also called *Leptis.* This last addition bears a strong resemblance to those marginal explanations made by ignorant copyists, and afterwards introduced into the text by others not less ignorant. But let us quit this geographical discussion, with observing, that it will always be extremely difficult to fix the exact positions of ancient towns upon these African shores, where the few vestiges re-

spected by time are continually liable to be overwhelmed by the shifting sands.

I found Captain Smith, an English officer, occupied in investigating the precious remains at Lebda; and as his acquaintance with the subject was seconded by command of time and every other facility, he will be able to give the public a much more complete description of the antiquities of Lebda and its environs, than could be expected from me.

The remainder of this day was employed by the Bey in reviewing his troops; when finding that certain Bedouin tribes in the district had neglected to furnish the requisite number of soldiers, he informed their chiefs that any further delay would be attended by the plunder of their tents.

Towards evening I was consulted by the Bey's brother-in-law, who was seized with violent head-ache and other inflammatory symptoms, for which I recommended bleeding; but accustomed to the use of amulets and ink, he at first rejected my advice, but after a long discussion consented, upon condition that I would give him my word that it would cure him. Observing me to hesi-

tate, he abruptly inquired why I wished to deprive him of his blood if I could not answer for his being cured; to which I replied, that I was quite sure he would die if I did not bleed him, but that, if I did, I had every reason to hope he would be soon well again. After a pause he submitted to the operation, but insisted that his blood should receive honourable sepulture under my tent; a ceremony at which he afterwards assisted. Next day finding himself nearly recovered, he made a great noise about it, at which I was not overjoyed, being uncertain how these barbarians might conduct themselves towards me in case they should be taken ill, or be wounded in battle. It appearing to the Marabouts that I was gaining credit at the expense of their reputation, they became extremely jealous of me, and loudly blamed the Bey for putting his life in the hands of a Christian dog. To this token of their ill will I should have paid no attention, if I had not suspected the Bey's purveyor to be leagued against me with those impostors; for he supplies my table most scantily, and yet I am loth to complain of him to the Bey

lest the purveyor should be sentenced to a public bastinado, or my fare become still more slender.

Whilst I was turning this in my mind, a servant of Mustapha Rais Marsa, son of the Pacha's first minister, entered my tent, bringing me, by his master's order, a dish full of Pistachio nuts and dates kneaded up with barley-meal and butter. Nothing could have happened more opportunely; and having made a hearty supper, I gave the remnants to the Bey's negroes who frequently visit my tent, and seem to have formed an attachment to me.

LETTER III.

FROM LEBDA TO MESURATA.

A fanatical Marabout—the ancient Ciniphus —fertility of the country—situation and sufferings of the Jews—the Bey's devotion and cruelty—remains of the Cisterne of Ptolemy —arrival at Mesurata.

15*th Feb.*

When we commenced our march at six this morning, the thermometer was at ten degrees; and a strong westerly breeze was occasionally accompanied by rain. The inhabitants of the environs, preceded by three negroes playing upon instruments like bagpipes, met us upon our way, near a small torrent, and desired to kiss the hand of the Bey, who finding from their discourse that we were near the dwelling of a Marabout, ordered the troops to halt till they should be supplied with provisions for the day by the neighbouring tribes.

My european dress attracting the notice

of the Marabout when he came to pay his respects to the Bey, he advanced towards me with a furious countenance, and in a threatening tone, addressed me in words which I did not comprehend, but which a negro near me translated to signify his intention of eating me alive; and the interpreter added, that the Marabout was perfectly capable of putting his threat in execution, several Jews having actually been treated so by some of those miscreants. The Bey's presence restrained the Mahometan's savage zeal within proper bounds; but this specimen of a ferocious disposition was not encouraging to one who was about to traverse a country abounding with such barbarous fanatics.

At the distance of three hours march from Lebda we reached the rocky bed of the torrent Uadi-Quaam, which flows from adjacent hills to the south; it was now dry, but its waters have spread themselves out on each side, and formed pools and morasses surrounded by rushes. This torrent can be no other than the *Ciniphus* of the ancient geographers; and as Ptolemy and Strabo agree in fixing it to the west of the promontory *Cephalus*, now called Cape Me-

surata, Cellarius should not in his tables have placed it to the east of that promontory and within the gulph of the great Syrtis. There is also a passage in Strabo which leaves no doubt upon the subject; for he speaks of a bridge constructed by the Carthaginians across the morasses; and the remains of the piles which supported the arches of a bridge are still to be seen there. He likewise says, that the surrounding country was frequently inundated by the torrent; such also is the case at present during the rainy season. The people of *Leptis* were probably supplied with water from the *Ciniphus*, the remains of an aqueduct stretching out from the ruins of the bridge towards that town being still visible.

If this be, as I conclude, the torrent *Ciniphus*, the hills from which it flows must be those called by Ptolemy, τῶν χάριτων, or the Graces, by which appellation they were mentioned by Herodotus[a] long before the time of Ptolemy, though modern geographers seem little to have attended to him; since in their maps we find these hills erroneously placed close to the shore. If, as

[a] Lib. iv. 575.

stated by Herodotus, they were two hundred stadia from the sea, we must look for them in the last ramifications of the Goriano chain, which form precisely the limits of this district to the south, and preserve the character given of them by that historian, as being covered with trees, and contrasting, by their verdure, with the scorched and arid soil of Libya.

The extensive plain, which about an hour's march from the torrent, stretches out to the east as far as Cape Mesurata, is abundantly productive, and appears to have been the most populous part of Libya in the time of Herodotus, who compares its exuberant fertility to that of the country round Babylon, the richest soil at that time known, and yielding thirty for one. This extraordinary degree of fruitfulness is not owing to the industry of the inhabitants, but proceeds from the generous nature of the soil, spontaneously covered with palm and olive trees, which there require no sort of cultivation. Upon this plain are three large villages called Sliten, inhabited by Jews and Marabouts, the latter of whom have so increased and multiplied that the whole country is thickly strewed with their

little churches; and the Jews are in such subjection to them, that besides the performance of the lowest menial offices, they are in various ways fleeced of their gains by the Marabouts, and exposed to every species of extortion and indignity. These villages are at some distance from the Mediterranean, the sea-shore not being habitable on account of the dry and shifting sands, which the wind is continually disturbing and accumulating.

The vigorous vegetation of these plains implies a sufficiency of water; in the time of Herodotus they were well supplied with springs and fountains; but as the water is now suffered to lose itself in the sandy soil, the traveller is forced to quench his thirst at a muddy pool. The vestiges of the ancient dwellers upon this luxuriant tract, are frequently observable in the fragments with which the modern huts are constructed, and in the ruins of old towers in which some of the Marabouts have contrived to perch themselves.

16*th Feb.*

We continued traversing this fine plain, having to the south a chain of hills which appeared to extend towards Cape Mesu-

rata; and at every step my admiration of this fertile but almost deserted and uncultivated tract was powerfully excited.

The Bey made frequent visits to the chapels of the Marabouts, with whom this district is peopled; but these fits of devotion only seized him near inhabited spots from which he expected that provisions would be sent to his troops whilst he was at his prayers; and if his expectations were disappointed, he ordered the huts to be burned, the flocks and herds to be driven away, and the owners of them to be severely beaten.

We were met upon the march by two messengers from Bengasi, who brought word to the Bey that his rebellious brother was no sooner apprized of the advance of the Tripoline army, than he evacuated Bengasi and retreated a day's journey beyond it. These tidings greatly rejoiced the Bey; and the rebel's retreat gave rise to much gladness in the camp, as well as to much boasting and many vain observations upon his cowardice.

Among the sands near the sea, and about eight hours distant from Cape Mesurata, are the remains of an ancient town called

Orir by the Moors, consisting of such fragments of walls, ruins of houses, pieces of marble, and shattered mosaic pavements, as prove it to have been once a handsome town. Its site corresponds with that of the *Cisterne* or Κιστέρναι of Ptolemy, situated, he says, precisely between Cape Triero (which is the promontory *Cephalus* of Strabo) and the pools of the *Ciniphus*.

After a march of six hours from the villages of Sliten, where we had encamped last night, we reached an eminence commanding towards the east the village of Zautmaggiò, situated in a pleasant country of green fields scattered over with palm and olive trees. As we were still an hour's march from Mesurata, and there were numerous wells near the village, the Bey halted near it for the night, and deferred his solemn entry into Mesurata till the morning; and in the course of the evening, Sidy-Mhamet-Agà, the governor of that town, arrived to pay his respects to the Bey, with a numerous retinue of Marabouts and Negroes, colours flying, and the customary music of bagpipes and cymbals.

17th Feb.

Drawing nearer to the Mediterranean, we wound our march among the intricate and sandy hillocks which occupy the shore, and conceal the neighbouring districts from observation; but just before we reached Mesurata we issued from those sandy defiles, and entered a beautiful country covered with extensive corn-fields and forests of palm and olive trees, and embellished near the town with handsome gardens.

Mesurata is situated a mile from the sea, near the western extremity of the Cape; and on that side, the soil is sandy and bare, the promontory being wholly composed of sand hills. The mountains to the south, which bound the plain we have been traversing, and which thence appeared to extend to Cape Mesurata, dwindle so much in their progress towards that point, as to be entirely lost among the sand hills which are confusedly scattered along the coast.

It is here necessary to correct an error in Arrowsmith's map of Africa, where the Goriano mountains are laid down so as to induce a belief, that there is a wide and uninterrupted plain between the little desert and Cape Mesurata, to which they are there

made to extend; whereas not only a branch of those mountains intervenes and terminates abruptly near the sea at Lebda, but their prolongation as far as Cape Mesurata is wholly groundless.

The town of Mesurata is not composed of contiguous masses of houses, as in Europe, but consists of scattered habitations, separated by gardens, and most wretchedly constructed; for they are small dwellings not more than ten feet high, fabricated with pebbles cemented with mud, the roof being nothing but palm leaves and straw interwoven, laid upon rafters and daubed over with a mixture of mud and sand. As the heavy rains easily dissolve this composition, these houses fall to pieces before the rainy season is over; diseases of the eyes, rheumatism and dysentery are the general and natural consequences of the damp vapours to which the inhabitants are exposed; and to this cause of sickness may be added another arising from their total ignorance of the use and benefit of lime, though living upon a calcareous soil. Custom, which operates as a law among barbarous nations, so strongly attaches these people to this mode of construction, that in places where

the ruins of ancient towns offer them an abundant supply of the finest wrought stone, they invariably break it in pieces before they use it.

The inhabitants of Mesurata derive their chief subsistence from the produce of the soil; but the town contains also some manufactories of woollen carpets of divers colours, the principal merit of which arises from the very fine quality of the native wool that is employed in them.

Caravans go from Mesurata to Fezzan and Vadei with cotton goods, camlets, carpets, and a large assortment of Venetian coloured glass beads, the richest and most valued ornaments of the beauties of Tombuctoo; and at Vadei they meet the caravans of Negroes, who convey those articles to Tombuctoo, and bring gold dust, ivory, and slaves.

No Europeans, nor even the inhabitants of the Barbary coasts, have ever yet passed that boundary of commercial intercourse with the interior of Africa, or are ever likely to do so; for besides that none but Negroes can risk, with so little proportionate danger, a journey of sixty days, across burning sands, and under the influence

of a scorching sun, they alone are provided with the proper passport for insuring the respect of the wandering tribes of other Negroes, whom they may encounter upon their journey; this passport is their colour; nor will any title that any European can produce, be ever so universally acknowledged and respected upon this vast continent.

It should not be forgotten, that the passage through the country of the Garamanti, now called Fezzan, was familiar to the ancients, and frequently used by them for the conveyance of certain precious stones to Europe.[a] But the ignorance of the present government, and especially the extortionary practices of the chiefs of Mesurata, have nearly closed a communication with the interior, which in other hands would have eminently promoted the prosperity of that town; for the passage from thence to Fezzan and Vadei is not only shorter, but more practicable than from any other part of the Barbary coast. The caravans cautiously avoid the district of Tavarga, one day's journey south of Mesurata, on account of the noxious vapours from the marshes.

[a] Strabo. loc. cit.

Tavarga forming part of the hereditary possessions of the Pacha's second son, some of the chiefs of the tribes that dwell there, hastened to Mesurata, bringing to their prince a tribute of exquisite dates, the principal produce of their lands.

The government of Mesurata is confided to an Agà, who has a military command over the whole province, and can raise eight hundred horsemen, and as many infantry. But as these levies are subject to the Agà's caprice, and made without due regard to the number of the inhabitants, no accurate estimate can be formed of the real state of the population, which, however, is always below that which with us would warrant the levy of such a force. Besides these military attributes, the Agà of Mesurata, as the immediate organ of the Pacha's will, unites in his own person all the judiciary and legislative powers of the state, if indeed such appellation can be bestowed upon an authority uncontrolled either by equity, reason, custom, or public opinion.

The Bey alighted at the Agà's residence, which is distinguished from the other houses in the town only by its size; and a large

bucket full of porridge made of barley-meal boiled up with meat and butter, was the rich banquet which the Agà placed upon the floor before his sovereign's son and his retinue.

We were detained two days at Mesurata by such furious hurricanes as greatly damaged our canvas dwellings, and brought with them such a deluge of rain as left me not a dry corner in my tent; but notwithstanding that inconvenience, I preferred it to sleeping a second time in a chamber at the Agà's, on account of the muddy distillations from the roof, with which I found myself bedaubed when I awoke in the morning.

18th Feb.

The Bey gave a solemn audience to the inhabitants of Mesurata, and the chiefs of the neighbouring tribes. Near him stood the Agà, and on each side, according to their stations, were the Bey's courtiers, and such other persons as he intended most to distinguish. He placed me upon his right hand, and seemed delighted to shew that he had a European in his service. This distinction had such an effect, that as soon as the audience was terminated, my friendly

negroes took an opportunity of acquainting the Bey with the scanty manner in which my table was supplied by the purveyor, who no sooner saw himself in danger than he ran to my tent, and throwing himself at my feet, with tears in his eyes, supplicated my forgiveness. I not only chearfully forgave him, but in order to convince him of my sincerity and good will, presented him a glass of rum; so now all I have to fear is that instead of starving me, he will subject me to the penalties arising from repletion.

LETTER IV.

FROM MESURATA TO LUBEY.

Gulph of the Syrtis—tribe of the Uled-Aley—Camp at Arar—brackish water—use of charcoal powder—sudden changes in the temperature—optical illusion—incrustations of salt—animals upon the coast—arrival at Lubey.

20th Feb.

UPON the return of fine weather we decamped, the Agà following us with five hundred cavalry, and as many foot soldiers mounted upon camels. These troops not only remained entirely under the Agà's orders during the expedition, but he had so contrived to captivate the Bey's confidence as to have great influence in his councils.

After a march of two hours we reached the extremity of the promontory, which advancing into the sea in three points divided by bays, is on that account called by

Ptolemy, Cape Triero. Towards its eastern boundary, and at a place called Kasar-Hamed, is a chain of rocks running from the north west to the south east, and forming a bay capable of sheltering small vessels in bad weather; and at the extremity of the cape is the tomb of a Marabout, which may serve as a signal to mariners from the westward, to avoid the entrance of the gulph.

From this cape the eye commands nearly the whole of that vast gulph, and of the desert regions which adjoin it; and my heart shrunk at the sight of those melancholy solitudes which I was about to traverse; for the earth is there destitute of its usual ornaments, and the whole country is so flat that not a single hillock can be discovered.

Mariners pass with a sort of horror before this gulph, whose annals, from the remotest ages, abound with shipwrecks and disasters. Strabo observes that vessels steered their course far from the gulph, lest they should be driven into it by the winds, and buried in its muddy bottom by the flux and reflux of the sea; for in that sense at least he is translated and interpreted by his commen-

tators. Pliny speaking of the two Syrtes, calls them "*vadoso ac reciproco mari diros*;" and from that received opinion, are derived the "*Syrtes æstuosæ*" of Horace, and the expressions of all the old writers by whom this gulph has been mentioned. Seduced by these notions, Cellarius cavils about the name of Syrtis, deriving it from the Greek συρειν or draw in, not knowing that *Sert* in Arabic means a desert, and is still used in that sense along the gulph. I must, however, after visiting these shores, venture to declare my opinion against the existence of a flux and reflux, alluded to by the old geographers. It is true, that into this vast breach in the coast, in which the sea ingulphs itself, and which is not separated from the burning regions of Africa by any chain of mountains to the south, the cold northerly winds from the opposite shores of Italy precipitate themselves in winter like a torrent, and drive the waters of the Mediterranean so violently into the gulph that they overflow, and spread themselves far beyond its natural boundary. During this influx, the waves which rush in from the east, break upon the opposite elevated shores of the Pentapolis, and contribute, by

their clashing with the others, to form those whirlpools which are so fatal to the mariner; and Strabo must doubtless have intended to refer to these periodical swellings of the waters, whose motions have been interpreted to signify flux and reflux, and have been thus assimilated to those of the ocean.

The shores of the Syrtis were once inhabited by the tribe of the Uled-Aly, which rebelling against the Pacha of Tripoli, was not long since annihilated by his eldest son. Strong in the solitude of their district, they assassinated with impunity every one who attempted to traverse it; and the mariner, dreading these miscreants still more than tempests and quicksands, carefully avoided these inhospitable shores. It is not, therefore, to be regretted, that Mhamet should have exterminated such a barbarous and bloodthirsty tribe, the head of whose chief I saw fixed upon a pole at the extremity of the gulph.

The plants upon this coast are of mean forms, frequently covered with prickles, and of a dry and meagre aspect, suited to the nature of this sandy soil, scorched by an ardent sun. The most numerous fa-

milies of them are the papillionaceous, the scabrous leaf, and the labiate, with a few of the liliaceous and the syngenesious, but I have not yet seen one of the umbelliferous tribe. Although among the plants I have collected for you, I find many such as we noticed during our excursions upon the maritime hills of Liguria, still I sometimes discover in them certain strange appearances, and something like a new character; which makes me hope that you will find many novelties in my collection.

After five hours march along the coast, we halted at Arar, and encamped near some wells of brackish water, (excavated in sandstone abounding with pieces of shells united by a calcareous cement) which filters through the stone. This mass is not very thick, for the water issues from the sides of the well at the depth of five or six feet, and clarifies itself in the cavity. Necessity every where gives rise to the same expedients; and the present method of procuring water in this arid soil is the same that was used in past times; for Pliny says, "*Puteos tamen haud difficiles binum ferme cubitorum inveniunt altitudine, ibi restagnantibus Mauritaniæ aquis.*" The Roman naturalist does not appear to

have erred in ascribing the origin of the water in these shallow wells, to the waters of Mauritania, which stagnate under the vast heaps of sands with which this coast abounds; and though the water tastes brackish to lips accustomed to the limpid streams of Liguria, I do not think that it contains more than a fourth part of salt water.

21st Feb.

We remained encamped all this day, in expectation of the troops from Mesurata, and were joined by four chiefs from Bengasi, who informed the Bey that his brother's savage acts in that place, had so alienated the minds of the surrounding tribes, that they were determined to declare in the Bey's favour at the first appearance of his army. These important tidings filled the troops with fresh exultation, of a very different nature from the true courage observable in good soldiers.

At Arar the Bey received a fresh supply of dates from his subjects at Tavarga, which is only a few hours' march to the south of Arar; and, in the same direction, an hour beyond Tavarga, is a small village

called Uadelf, where the people subsist entirely upon dates, the sole produce of those scorched and sandy regions.

Before we quitted Arar, we made a copious provision of brackish water, which was not improved by being put into the skins of sheep slaughtered the preceding day, and which had undergone no other process than being powdered over with charcoal dust, and dried in the sun. The water thus contracts a blood-coloured hue, and a nauseous odour and flavour absolutely revolting to the senses; but the delicate sensibility of the palate is overcome by the irresistible power of thirst, and I now drink this water with as much pleasure as I should swallow an ice. You will not fail to observe, that these barbarians may dispute with us the priority of the discovery of the antiseptic properties of charcoal, which our chemists considered as a novelty.

22d Feb.

Upon quitting Arar we proceeded southwards, and in a few hours reached the skirts of some low hills, stretching from south to north, and terminating about two miles from the sea. I am unable to say

whether they communicate with the Goriano chain which advances towards Mesurata; but if they do, it is probable that the heights forming Cape Mesurata are mere accumulations of sand, collected by the sea and the winds; this whole tract consisting of the finest sand mixed with fragments of marine shells, chiefly of the kind called *Trochus*, and frequently hardened by a calcareous cement. We passed a spot called Melfa, quite covered with a prickly plant, of the broom species, and at noon we halted at Segamengiura.

In these environs I found a plant with a fibrous root, here and there furnished with fleshy tubercles, in taste somewhat like the Bog-rush (*Cyperus æsculentus, Linn.*) and called *Temeri* by the Bedouins, who eat them raw; the leaves of this plant are hirsute, whitish, and indented; but the want of its fructifying parts renders its class uncertain.

We experienced to-day one of those sudden variations in the temperature of the air so frequent upon these coasts and so unpleasant upon a march. At six in the morning the thermometer was at five degrees, and the soldiers were benumbed with

cold; but at two in the afternoon it rose to nineteen, and the heat was almost insupportable. The Bey observing me to suffer from it, advised me to continue no longer in confinement, as he termed my european attire, but to assume that of a Mameluke; and I really found myself much relieved by the adoption of it, the movements of the body being more free, the air more easily renewed, and the sun much less scorching. The Bey was overjoyed on seeing me in this dress; the whole tribe of courtiers complimented me upon it; and I no sooner re-entered my tent, than the Bey's Mamelukes, who had never noticed me before, waited upon me, and without further ceremony proposed our partaking together of a bottle of my rum. I cheerfully paid the tribute; but under pretence of requiring repose, I prevailed upon them to drink the rum in their own tent; for though the countenance and protection of these renegadoes are necessary to me, I cannot bring myself to be familiar with them.

23d Feb.

A copious dew fell during the night, and so refreshed the air, that at half past six

this morning, the thermometer was very little above four degrees.

After an hour's march upon a scorched and sandy soil, we rather inclined towards the south-west, and in two hours and a half further, at certain spots called Uenat and Machada, found ourselves upon marshy ground, in some places so deep, as to be dangerous; the horses either stumbling over the stumps of reeds, or sinking so far into the mud, as to be extricated with great difficulty. With the dirty, fetid, and brackish water of this swampy ground, we endeavoured to quench the thirst of our cavalry.

Towards the gulph I observed an eminence of testaceous sand, and occasionally saw pools and streams of salt water, together with copious incrustations and masses of marine salt; all evidently proving that the sea had not long since passed over that tract.

The great heat induced us to halt at eleven, and the tents were pitched at a place called Minesla, the thermometer then standing in the shade at twenty-three. The situation was open and without lateral reflection; but the sandy, whitish, and naked soil forms round the body a hot and suffo-

cating atmosphere. Here, for the first time, was offered to my wondering eyes that false appearance of a vast expanse of water, which seems to cover the plains as far as the eye can reach. The hills which formed the boundaries of this imaginary lake, were reflected from its surface, as if from that of real water; every thing concurred to complete this optical illusion, and many of the soldiers shouted for joy at the prospect of a great supply of water. But the faster we hastened towards the banks of the supposed lake, the more quickly did they seem to recede, and at length the phantom disappeared entirely, leaving us more than ever sensible of the torment of that thirst under which we suffered. In justice to the troops, I must acknowledge, that under all their privations, they keep up their spirits without murmuring. The horses and camels suffer greatly, and many even perish from the unwholesome quality of the water; but it is said that we are to repair such losses as may occur among them, at the expense of the first tribe of Bedouins we encounter.

In the evening I was visited by a Bedouin, who wishing to lose a little blood,

had endeavoured to bleed himself, according to their practice, with the point of a stiletto, and had lacerated his arm. My bleeding him in the proper manner gained me such credit among his tribe, that many counterfeited illness, from the desire of having such an operation performed upon them so easily and with such slight pain; and if I had not resisted their applications, I should have had to bleed the greatest part of the tribe.

24th Feb.

After two hours march from Minesla, we found a well about twenty feet deep, containing only a little brackish water, of a bituminous colour, which was eagerly drunk by the horses, camels, cattle, and many of the soldiers, who after swallowing more mud than water, cheerfully continued their march. Advancing towards the south, we had the sea between two and three miles upon our left, but concealed from us by sand hills; and we traversed some open plains, spotted with bushes or broken in upon by swamps and pools of salt water. At the depth of not more than four inches in the sand by which these pools are en-

circled, are very thick white incrustations of marine salt, in such abundance that we heard it crackle under the feet of the horses and camels, and observed the surface of the soil to be whitened by their passage. These incrustations and masses of sea-salt are mentioned by Herodotus,* as existing upon the border of that vast girdle of sand which he describes as extending from Egyptian Thebes, across the country of the Ammonii, as far as the pillars of Hercules. That is now the great desert of Sahara; and the hills in which he says the salt was found, are perhaps nothing more than the sandy heaps which rise upon its confines.

As far as my observations extend, these marshes have no communication with the sea; and it seems almost needless to repeat that all these sands are sprinkled over with small crusts, and that the hills which run towards the marshes and the sea are composed of the same materials; with this difference, however, that the sand of the hills is aggregate and compact, but that of the plain is loose and light.

In the hope of finding some provisions for the table, several of the soldiers wan-

* Lib. iv. 181.

dered about the country in quest of game where the nature of the environs permitted. This part of the African coast no longer affords even a specimen of those monstrous animals, of which in ancient times it was fabled to be the nurse.[a] Instead of the immeasurable serpent which was attacked by Regulus with military array, I found only a small snake, about ten inches long, but said to be malignant and venomous. The monkeys which inhabit the skirts of Mount Atlás, and are so numerous near Algiers, are no where to be seen upon this coast. The gazelle and a species of wild bull, of small stature and dingy colour, with a thick black tuft upon its tail, sometimes visit these solitudes, but are too swift to be taken without difficulty. The marshes abound with bustards, which came so near us, that several were knocked down by the Bedouins with stones, a much more certain and efficacious weapon in their hands than the wretched musket with which they are armed.

I had here to contend with countless hosts of fleas, which issuing in swarms from the sands, entirely cover our legs, insinuate

[a] Leonum arida nutrix. Hor. Od.

themselves into our tents and garments, and make the sufferings of the night more intolerable than those of the day. The Bedouins, accustomed to struggle with these vermin, spread their clothes upon the ground, cover them with sand, and expose them to the sun; when the insect, allured by the warmth, quits the clothes, but instead of finding his prey, gets entangled in the sand, and is thus shaken off and buried in the soil.

Whilst the troops were engaged in hostilities with this thick and swarthy crowd of enemies, our horses and camels were no less tormented by a prodigious number of tikes, which they had picked up during the march, and by which they were stung almost to madness, and became very difficult to manage.

So much time had been lost by the sportsmen, that it was evening before we encamped at Lubey, two hours distant from the sea. The troops seemed much harassed by the march, and by the want of the first necessaries of life; but the Bedouins, accustomed to these solitudes, bear up against fatigue and privations, and endeavour to keep up the spirits of the rest.

LETTER V.

FROM LUBEY TO ENEUVA.

Observations upon the gulph—wells of good water, and verdant meadows at Zafferan—ancient columns—ruins—the Carace *of Strabo—arrival at Eneuva—visit from the Bey.*

If you examine the best maps of Africa, you will find that upon the western shores of the gulph of the great Syrtis, the sea is represented as forming an inlet or bay, about fifty miles long and from two to four broad, being a kind of breach or chasm in the continent, extending from north to south. This is called by D'Anville, the Gulph of Zuca, and is laid down by Arrowsmith, though without a name; but notwithstanding my route lay so near those shores, I could perceive no traces of such a bay. As a further elucidation of this point in geography, I transmit you the account[*] of a voyage, undertaken by my in-

[*] See Appendix.

telligent friend Captain Leautier, for the express purpose of surveying the east and west coasts of the great gulph; and who, in coasting as far as thirty degrees twenty-seven minutes north latitude, which is considerably beyond the alleged site of the mouth of the supposed bay, not only ascertained the unity of the coast, but discovered nothing that could in anywise have led to the supposition of such an inlet. But if you are so devoted to the authority of the above eminent geographers, as not readily to give up the existence of the gulf of Zuca, I will endeavour to reconcile that authority with the truth.

It must not be forgotten, that the country contiguous to this part of the great gulph is flat, and very little raised above the ordinary level of the sea; that though the shores are lined with sand hills, they are for the most part shifting and frequently dispersed by hurricanes; that in the winter the waters are forcibly driven upon the African coast, and that the currents running from north to south greatly increase the body of water in the gulph. I am disposed to think, that under these circumstances, the sea, breaking down the sandy

ramparts upon the beach, spreads itself over the adjacent plains, and inundates a considerable tract of country. Thence it happens, that the vast pools of salt water which commence between Arar and Segamengiura, although frequently disunited, form in winter one very long and spacious lake, communicating with the sea, as long as particular causes keep up its level to a certain height; when those causes cease, the communication terminates, and the return of heat promoting evaporation, the lake dwindles into different pools, and the spots which the water had occupied remain marshy; but when their edges become quite dry, abundant deposits of marine salt are formed upon them, as we have seen. The stratum of sand which covers these deposits is no obstacle to this process; for the whole of the soil is sandy, and the heat and porous qualities of these sands powerfully promote the evaporation of the salt water beneath them.

I am unable to say whether D'Anville and Arrowsmith founded their notions of the existence of a bay, upon the descriptions of ancient or of modern travellers; but if the authority of Strabo should have

had any share in them, it occurs to me that his explanation is not very different from mine. "Entering the greater Syrtis," says that geographer,[a] "upon the right hand after passing Cape *Cephalus*, is a marsh about three hundred stadia in length and seventy in breadth, terminating in a bay, with some small islands and a station at its mouth." In thus resorting to the authority of Strabo, I must mention that I have adhered neither to Bonacciuoli's Italian edition, nor to that of Almegoven, who both translate λιμνη to mean "*lake;*" whereas the usual meaning of that word, in this instance, proved also by the inspection of the country, is *marsh.* With respect to the station, it cannot exactly be said to have been a port, Strabo using the word υφορμοι for *port,* which word Bonacciuoli has erroneously translated into the word "*mole;*" and thus by degrees, and upon the authority of Strabo, the commentators have created a port, which has well nigh been described as provided with a mole.

25th Feb.

After a march of only four hours, we

[a] Lib. xvii.

encamped at Matrau, about a league from the sea, near a well of muddy and brackish water, with which some pilgrims to Mecca were preparing to quench their thirst; but they were too slow in their operations, for after the Bey and his staff, his slaves, his horses, and his camels had been sufficiently supplied with water, the armed multitude rushed in, and left not a drop for the pilgrims.

26th Feb.

After a march of five hours, and about a mile and a half from the sea, I was refreshed by the sight of a pleasanter country, and of meadows full of an elegant species of ranunculus, with large and very white flowers, which I conceive to be the original of that which by long cultivation in Europe has multiplied its petals, and is called by botanists "*Ranunculus Asiaticus.*" But what proved a source of greater delight and utility, and caused us to halt all night, was the discovery of several wells of good water, at a place called Zafferan, near the sea. From the vigour of the plants, the soil must be extremely fertile, as indeed it always is where vegetation is

promoted by an elevated temperature and considerable moisture in the earth. Some hordes of Bedouins had been feeding their flocks and herds near this place, for we not only observed the fresh tracks of their cattle upon the ground, but found several saddles, dried skins, spades, and other articles that testified the hurry with which they had decamped on hearing of our approach. The Bey affected not to comprehend their reason for relinquishing the honour of seeing him. Our troops joyfully passed the day in rambling about the meadows, which were no less useful and welcome to our camels and horses; and the freshness and verdure of the grass were rendered doubly agreeable by the parching heat to which we had lately been exposed.

27th Feb.

Continuing along the coast, we observed, after an hour's march, a pedestal supporting a square pillar, of sandstone, of considerable height, so corroded, that it was impossible to decypher the inscriptions with which the four sides of the column were entirely covered. After another hour's march we passed a second, and at a similar dis-

tance a third pillar, both equally covered with defaced and illegible inscriptions. Opposite the first of these columns, towards the sea, and at a place called Elbenia are the remains of a tower surmounted by a cupola.

I cannot with precision determine what this place was called by the old geographers, nor can I pretend to ascertain the purport of the three pillars; but as the meadows of Zafferan, and an abundance of good water must have been strong inducements to settle upon that part of the coast, it is possible that we may there find the *Aspi* of Strabo and of Ptolemy, which the former says was situated immediately beyond the marsh, and, according to the latter, was next to a place called Maccomacan.

As Strabo says, that the best port in the gulph was near *Aspi*, it may be that of Isa, which Leautier fixes seventeen leagues south of the first anchorage-ground within the gulph, and in latitude 31° 23′ 10″ north; and the position of *Aspi*, in Arrowsmith's map, does not materially differ from that which I have assigned it.

If Zafferan should be the ancient *Aspi*, an old tower near it can be no other than

that of Eufranta, mentioned by Strabo as συνεχης to Aspi; and as the Ptolemies, after the conquest of the Cyrenaica, pushed their frontiers thus far, I suspect that the three square columns placed at certain distances, and covered with inscriptions, marked the separation of their territories from those of Carthage, pointed out where the interior limits were established, and indicated other arrangements between the two powers, such as it was the practice of the ancients to engrave upon metal or stone, and place at the confines of their states.

Encouraged by this apparent concordance between ancient and modern geography, I am of opinion, that some ruins which I remarked by the road side about three hours distance from Elbenia, were those of a town called by Strabo, *Carace;* frequented, he says, by the Carthaginians, as a mart for their wine, and for the purchase of the juice of the *Silphium,* from those who brought it there clandestinely from Cyrene.[a] It is not my intention to treat of the *Silphium* until I shall reach the Cyrenaica, the Silfiferous region of the ancient geographers; but, in the passage I have just cited from Strabo, I have taken

[a] Strabo, lib. xviii.

the liberty of reading ὀπον τοῦ Σιλφιου, "the juice *of* the *Silphium*," instead of ὀπον καὶ Σιλφιον, "the juice, *and* the *Silphium*," or, as Buonacciuoli erroneously translates it, "the Benzoin and the *Silphium*." It is well known that the Cyreneans extracted from the *Silphium*, which was a plant peculiar to their country, a juice in such estimation and value in those times, that it was sold on account of the state; and the Cyrenean juice, mentioned by Strabo and other old writers, as synonymous with that of the *Silphium*, was undoubtedly the object of that contraband trade, which Strabo says was carried on at Carace, between the Cyreneans and the Carthaginians.

The good water at Zafferan, and that which we found in the wells upon this day's march, so refreshed and invigorated us, that notwithstanding the intense heat of the weather we continued our route during eight hours, and encamped at Eneuva, where we found a well of excellent water about three miles from the sea, which was concealed from us by sand hills.

I was here honoured with a visit from the Bey, who I imagine, intended it as a compensation for the many inconveniences to

which my attendance upon him during this fatiguing expedition must necessarily expose me, and as a token of his due appreciation of my voluntary professional services to his army, although appointed only to attend his person.

He seemed to take great pleasure in examining my surgical instruments, but was most particularly struck with my thermometer, which I was an hour in endeavouring to explain to him, and upon which were marked the different degrees of heat and cold to which the quicksilver rises or falls at certain places upon the globe. Can you believe that the Bey was totally ignorant of the existence of such a city as Petersburgh? I seized the opportunity of advising him so to manage his navy as to avoid receiving a geographical lesson from that quarter of the world.

Soon after the Bey had quitted my tent, he sent me an ostrich's egg, which afforded me a sumptuous repast before I retired to rest.

LETTER VI.

FROM ENEUVA TO MARATE.

Nehim—pillage of a tribe of Bedouins—natural appearances in the soil—locusts—fatalism of the Mahometans—military exhibition — extensive sand hills —geographical questions—expedition of the Psilli—patriotism of the two Philæni—arrival at Marate.

We are now again amidst vast salt-water marshes separated from the sea by hillocks of sand; and this morning we marched during ten hours close to one of these marshes, which was at least half a mile wide, and about one mile from the sea. It was beginning to grow dry; and beneath the sand, upon its edges, were the usual incrustations of marine salt.

Three quarters of an hour beyond the southern boundary of the marsh we reached a hilly district called Nehim, affording pasture and wells of excellent water, at no great distance from the sea, and much fre-

quented by a tribe of Bedouins who feed their cattle among the hills, upon which the grass, even in Summer, is vivified by the moisture of the soil. Our arrival was for them most unfortunate; for our cavalry being greatly fatigued as well as diminished in number, we seized all their camels and horses, and gave them in exchange the worst and most unserviceable of ours. They affected to be so much gratified by this unprofitable barter, that the chiefs of the tribes actually came and thanked the Bey for the honour he had conferred upon the tribe by visiting their solitude, emptying their wells, and taking away their horses and camels; to which the Bey replied, that he would permit them to milk their ewes for the supply of his troops as long as he should judge it convenient, and would with pleasure also accept some of their sheep.

2nd March.

After employing two days in pillaging our luckless hosts, we marched towards the east, and during seven hours continued in that direction, along an undulated country, chiefly sandy, but occasionally diversified

with pasture grounds. Truffles, like those in Piedmont, abound in this district, but are held in no estimation; there is also a great quantity of hares, many of which were killed by the soldiers. We encamped upon a lofty eminence called Scegga, and joyously fed upon the spoils of the preceding days.

3rd March,

We proceeded towards the south-east, in order to avoid a vast lake of salt water, extending from Scegga to the confines of Judia. Amidst its waters appeared several mounds of sand, resembling small islands; it did not seem to have any direct communication with the sea; and many concurring circumstances induce me to think that its origin is similar to that of the marshes I have lately described.

Our march now lay among intricate hills, assuming an aspect of fertility wherever there is any moisture in the soil. In many naked parts of their skirts I observed layers of a shining laminated stone, of the selenite species. The powder of sulphur, which Leautier remarked upon the surface of the water within the gulph, must certainly

partake of the nature of this gypsum, which geologists say belongs to the third formation. As I never observed any sulphureous appearances, they are probably covered either by sand or water; for it is certain that small vessels resort to this coast both from Tripoli and Egypt for cargoes of this earth, which being impregnated with sulphur, is employed in the treatment of cutaneous diseases, to which camels are peculiarly liable. The association of substances hitherto observed wherever such formation has been examined, leads me to suppose that besides the salt yielded by these natural salt-pits, that substance usually termed *Sal gemma* or rock-salt, is also to be found here in its mineral state. I have never seen the salt-mines of Zoara, about twenty-five leagues west of Tripoli; but from what I could learn, the salt is there extracted from the earth, under which it exists in great beds. These characteristic features of the physical constitution of these regions were not omitted by the father of history and geography, in the valuable picture which he has transmitted of them to posterity.[a] It appears also from him

[a] Herod. Hist. lib. iv.

that besides the saline masses and incrustations scattered among the Libyan sands, there were upon the declivities of Mount Atlas, mines containing blocks of marine salt, both white and reddish, in such abundance that the inhabitants employed them instead of stone in the construction of their houses. Zoara cannot, according to my calculation, be very far from the site of those very excavations mentioned by Herodotus.

Travellers are indebted to the pilgrims of Mecca for heaps of stones, raised by them as landmarks through this labyrinth of hills, and piled so high by each passing pilgrim as to be secure from being buried in the sands.

The ground is full of holes made either by moles, rabbits, or a species of mouse very common here, with a fawn coloured back, a white belly, and a tufted tail, and called by the naturalists, *Mus gerboa ;* and many of our horses and camels were lamed by putting their feet into these holes.

The sun was hot enough almost to scorch our brains, and though I can no longer furnish you with the exact state of the temperature, my thermometer being broken, I

am confident that I never before experienced such burning heat. About mid-day an immense swarm of locusts almost eclipsed the sun, showered down upon the ground as thick as hail; and, as far as I could judge, celebrated their nuptials during their flight through the air. The sight of this cloud of insects made me reflect that if the Nasamoni had still inhabited this district, they would have had no occasion to go elsewhere in quest of these filthy animals for the sake of baking them in the sun and eating them.[a] Their descendants have not however deviated from the practice of their forefathers; for the ground, upon which the locusts settled in swarms, became a table spread with dainties, of which the Marabouts, the Bedouins, and the Negroes devoured a part when toasted before the fire, and then salted the remainder. They found very white and friable salt among the sands; some brushwood scorched by the sun supplied them with fuel for toasting their prey, and they set fire to the brushwood with a plant which they found upon the spot, quite white and downy, with very thick tufts at the top of the stalk; and the

[a] Herod. lib. iv. 172.

spark from a flint falling upon this downy tuft, it takes fire, and consumes the rest of the plant. I could not find any of it in flower, but am of opinion that its downy tufts are produced by insects, and that from its leaves and odour it must be a species of *Artemisia.*

It was eight hours march from Scegga to Iudia, situated near the sea, where ten wells of excellent water at no great distance from each other, induced us to encamp. Some ruins of ancient buildings, and many fragments of wrought stone scattered in heaps upon the beach, bore testimony of former habitation.

4th March.

The excessive heat of the weather, and the fatigue of the troops did not allow us to march above five hours; and we halted at a place called Mairiga, near a pool of brackish water.

5th March.

We traversed a bare and stony soil, and in an hour reached a well of good water at the foot of a barren rocky hill, from which,

after a short halt and refreshing draughts, we continued our route past a place called Allabanbassa, and at length arrived at Geria, after a march of nine hours over a stony country. The soil at this place was so rocky, that we had the greatest difficulty in pitching the tents; no water was to be found; and we had not been provident enough to bring a supply. The want of foresight in not carrying water when marching under a burning sun in a scorched and arid soil with tired soldiers, and horses harassed by fatigue and thirst, is most unpardonable in a general, and might reduce a whole army to the most fatal extremity. It is surprising that the doctrine of fatalism, so deeply rooted in the breasts of these Mahometans, should render them thus stupidly blind to the perils which surround them. They who support that doctrine, on account of the courage it inspires, do not seem to have justly comprehended the maxim; and I rather think that it is suggested by the idea of fully yielding to whatever may procure pleasure at the moment, without ever thinking of providing for the future. This idea is certainly most prevalent among

these people, and contributes, no less than their other religious maxims, to that brutified state in which we find them.

As we had now reached the eastern boundary of the Tripoline district, and were about to enter that of Bengasi, the troops were in great commotion in the camp, loudly calling for *Barud* (powder), in order to celebrate the transit. Such rejoicings, while we were suffering for want of water, may be numbered among the many idle absurdities produced by fatalism.

6th March.

As we approached the sea we found an open plain, upon which a part of the troops exhibited a sort of tournament. Two corps of Bedouin cavalry having formed in line to the right and left of the Bey, five or six troopers detached themselves from one end of the line, and howling like madmen, galloped the whole length of the line to the other end, where they discharged their pieces, and rapidly wheeling, returned to their posts. They had no sooner fired, than as many others from the other extremity put themselves in motion, and with loud cries performed a similar ceremony.

Every discharge being a signal for five or six more to move and fire in like manner, the number was continually increasing; and as the parties encountered, they were thrown into such disorder that the horses frequently meeting with great violence, they were knocked down and considerably injured. At length the tumult and disorder augmented, so that the Bey deemed it prudent to interfere and check the warlike spirit of these Bedouins, who would otherwise have proceeded to serious extremities. This bloody and senseless exhibition ruined most of the horses engaged in it; and we had afterwards to march nine hours before we reached some wells of brackish water at Menal, near the sea; and there we pitched our tents. The route had been rendered unpleasant by occasional tracts of very fine shifting sand, of a reddish colour; and proceeding in the same direction the following day, (*7th March,*) the sands became more frequent and deep, as well as very uneven, being often collected in mounds which choaked up the passage, and rendered our march very slow and disagreeable; but we were under the absolute necessity of toiling over these burning and

shifting sand hills, in order to avoid a salt-water lake which had spread itself into the hollows, and obstructed the passage. If a south or south-easterly wind had arisen while we were thus employed, the whole army might have been buried under these sands, which those winds raise in waves not less dangerous than those of the stormy ocean. In order to escape the peril that threatened us, it became necessary to cheer the harassed soldiery with voice and example; nor was it till after seven hours of incessant toil and exertion under an ardent sun, that we succeeded in traversing this part of the coast, and reaching a place called Barga, where the country assumed a more favourable aspect, and was diversified with flowery meadows.

We were now arrived at the most interior and southern corner of the gulph, situated, according to Arrowsmith, in 30° 7′ 10″ north latitude: and our march, which had hitherto been in a south-easterly direction, was henceforward to the east.

It appears to me that the long bay into which the great gulph is made to form itself upon D'Anville's map, does not in reality exist, but that one of the capacious

lakes of salt water which are found near the extremity of the gulph, but divided from it by sand hills, has been mistaken for it.

During the last days of our march I have been endeavouring to discover if any mass of mountains, however distant, stretched out from west to east, in order to ascertain whether the chain of Mount Atlas extended in any shape, as far as the Cyrenean hills, or broke off opposite the gulph of the great Syrtis; but I saw nothing in support of its prolongation. The geographers who have discussed this point, do not seem to have laid sufficient stress upon a passage in Sallust,[a] who speaking of the confines of the Cyreneans and Carthaginians, which were situated exactly at the extremity of the gulph, says, "*Ager in medio arenosus, unâ specie; neque flumen, neque mons erat qui fines eorum discerneret. Quæ res eos in magno diuturnoque bello inter se habuit.*" If the river Triton had thrown itself into the gulph at its immediate extremity, as Pliny[b] asserts, the limits between those powers would not have been so subject to litigation; and it is probable that relying more upon Pliny's

[a] Bell. Jugurth. Section lxxix.

[b] Plin. lib. iv. cap. 4.

authority than upon research, Arrowsmith upon his map laid down a small river in this spot, and in the direction of south and north. But Pliny's assertion is sufficiently refuted by Sallust's description, by Strabo's silence, by Ptolemy's fixing the river Triton in another place, and lastly by my inspection of this part of the coast, where I saw nothing but sands, nor any other hills but sand hills.

The impetuous winds which blow in winter from the north, and, traversing the Mediterranean, reach without any diminution of force the northern shores of Africa, are powerful obstacles to the prolongation of hills; and the extent of the shifting sands, their enormous accumulations at the extremity of the gulph, and their very quality and colour, furnish additional proofs that there is no mountainous separation between this sandy shore, and the sands of the great desert of Sahara. From that ocean of sands, doubtless proceed those which are heaped up at the extremity of the gulph; for it must not be forgotten that the south winds reach the gulph, loaded with clouds of the finest reddish-coloured sand, and smother whole caravans when-

ever they unfortunately chance to be in their track. The fabulous expedition of the *Psilli* against the wind *Notus*, which had dried up the waters of the district they inhabited, furnishes us, from the nature of the country, with some geographical information not to be neglected. That people being destitute of water, with one consent took up arms and marched against the *Notus*; but when they reached the sands, the wind blew with such violence that they were all buried in them.[a] By this passage we clearly perceive, that unable any longer to exist in these unproductive regions, they united in an attempt to proceed to the south, directly against the wind, and probably towards the country of the Garamanti, now called Fezzan; and that having reached the extremity of the gulph, that is, having reached the sands, they were surprised by a whirlwind from the desert, and buried in the sand. I am the more disposed to think that this great depression of soil extends to the great desert, because as far as I can judge from our progress hither, it is probable that the extremity of the gulph lies more to the south than is

[a] Herod. lib. iv. 173.

laid down upon the best maps; and I am warranted in this opinion by the report of Leautier, who did not indeed navigate beyond 30° 27′ 11″ north lat.; but who could not from that point descry either the termination of the gulph, or the proximity of land.

The furthest boundary of the gulph of the great Syrtis incontestably decides the position of two places mentioned by the old geographers; the one is the fortress of *Automala,* of which I found not a vestige, though laid down precisely in this situation by Strabo; the other, the altars of the *Philæni.* Sallust and Valerius Maximus have transmitted to us an account of the memorable love of their country exhibited by the *Philæni;* two brothers, Carthaginians, who chose to be interred alive upon this shore rather than suffer the Cyreneans to push beyond this spot the confines of their state, to the prejudice of Carthage. It is useless to look here for the monuments which were to perpetuate the memory of their patriotism and self-devotion; for Pliny clearly tells us that these altars were of sand; and what monuments could the Carthaginians have erected more solemn and appropriate

than the very heaps of sand under which their two virtuous fellow-citizens consented to be buried for the public good? But it appears from Sallust that great honours were paid at Carthage to their memory.

8th March.

Directing our march eastwards, with the sea upon our left at the distance of two miles, we reached, in two hours, the skirts of a sandy hill, where we found a spacious marsh abounding with reeds, and watered our horses, though the water was extremely salt. This place is called Haen-Agan; and here terminated the sandy soil over which we had toiled during many days with considerable fatigue and trouble. We followed the same easterly direction six hours more as far as Marate, across a hilly country, sometimes pebbly and sometimes covered with grass and flowers; and here we encamped, congratulating ourselves upon having surmounted such difficulties, and upon the prospect of abundance afforded us by the improved appearance of the country.

LETTER VII.

FROM MARATE TO LABIAR.

Arabian tribes—tribute of the Bernusso or red cloak—ruins of considerable towns and forts—verdant plain of Ericab—antique architecture—arrival at Labiar.

MARATE is a place most welcome to the caravans and pilgrims, who after crossing the parched deserts of the Syrtis, here first find a supply of excellent water, in eight or nine wells deeply excavated in a calcareous stone, which shews itself in vast ridges above the surface of the earth.

There are two roads from Marate; one leading along the coast to Bengasi; the other into the interior towards the south-east, traversing the Pentapolis, and descending to the sea at Derna. This mountainous district, rich in springs and pasture-grounds, is the usual abode of several Arabian tribes, who lead here a patriarchal life. It was long customary for these tribes to send their chieftains to compliment the

Bey and offer him what is termed the tribute of the Bernusso, or red mantle, upon his first passage through the district: but upon this act of respect, the rapacity of the Pacha has founded a claim, which, under the modest title of tribute of the Bernusso, comprehends the tithe of the value of all they possess, whether cattle, their chief wealth, or any other kind of property. The tribes who are unprepared with this tribute at the passage of the Bey, are obliged, in a body, to follow the army; and their tents, women, children, and cattle, move in the rear until they can find means to satisfy the Bey's demands. You will readily believe, that we so managed as to be sure of this singular retinue, by our unexpected arrival among the nearest tribes, a circumstance, in other respects well suited to the Bey's designs, since he was certain that they who were thus forced to follow the troops could not declare in favour of the rebellion, the focus of which we were now approaching.

9th March.

After a march of three hours and a half from Marate, we reached a place called

Xara-Ducha, or Kasar-Aduchni, where I observed that the ground was covered for two miles around with ruins of old buildings, amongst which I admired the remains of an ancient round fort, surrounded by a fosse, cut in the live rock, and the vestiges of a fine paved road, leading from an opposite hill, by a bridge over the fosse, into the fort. At the entrance of this strong hold, I found some stones, with inscriptions in letters with which I am unacquainted, and which I had no time to copy. The stones employed in this edifice are sandstones, rather of a compact nature, containing fragments of shells, and dug out upon the spot.

10*th March.*

Upon the route to Barghetnavi, or Berchichamera, I observed two similar dilapidated forts; and, during our seven hours' march, saw numerous remains of old houses, one of which was so spacious, that its ruined wall measured four hundred paces in length.

We encamped and halted two nights at Barghetnavi, upon the remains of a city which the vestiges of streets, and enormous

square-wrought stones heaped up in every direction, prove to have been once considerable; and the numerous wells of good water, long since excavated in the rock, furnish another proof of a former extensive population. The soil of this deserted tract of country, though now uncultivated, has every appearance of natural fertility, and probably sufficed for the subsistence of its ancient inhabitants.

12th March.

Proceeding from east to north, we were surprised at the sudden and refreshing alteration of the scene; for a spacious plain of verdant pastures, spotted with the tents of Bedouins, and enlivened by numerous flocks of sheep, lay stretched out before us, extending from north to south. To the east it was bounded by a chain of hills, which, rising gradually from the edges of the plain, advanced towards the south as far as the eye could discover. This chain I afterwards ascertained to be the brow of an esplanade, about five hundred metres above the level of the Mediterranean, towards which it advances its rugged and precipitous branches, from Cape Ras-Sem

(the promontory *Phycus* of the ancients) as far as the gulph of Bomba. The tract of coast west of that cape, a little beyond Ptolometa, is inaccessible, except in some few bays formed by breaches in the mountains. This is the far-famed Cyrenaica, so renowned for the fertility of its soil, that the ancients there fixed the site of the celebrated garden of the Hesperides. The moisture afforded by this hilly tract enriches the beautiful pastures of Ericab, which were now spread before our eyes.

13th March.

We were now in the district of Bengasi, and during this day's halt, received several reinforcements, as well as visits, from the chiefs of the neighbouring tribes, who came arrayed in their large red mantles, to compliment the Bey, and receive his orders.

Seizing the opportunity afforded by this halt, I ascended one of the hills to the east of Ericab, in order to enjoy the view of the adjacent country, and in my way discovered a species of architecture to which I was hitherto a stranger, and which greatly excited my astonishment. It was a spacious

house excavated, or, as it were, extracted with the chisel, in one solid block from the bowels of the mountain, and divided into several compartments, alike cut out of the same mass. In going round this hill, I observed some other remains of edifices, which, though ill treated by time and much dilapidated, clearly proved by their foundations, that they had been constructed in the same manner. In one of them I perceived some of the stone inscribed with letters with which I am unacquainted.

If I am not mistaken, Upper Egypt contains several noble remains of this very antique kind of architecture; but among the letters I have just mentioned, I could find no analogy with the hieroglyphic alphabet composing the inscriptions upon their monuments. It is, therefore, reasonable to infer, that the people who, in the remotest ages dwelled upon these shores of the Mediterranean, had an alphabet and a language of their own; but who can say whether they borrowed their style of building from the Egyptians, or whether it migrated from them to Egypt?

14th and 15th March.

We employed two days in traversing the hilly country, directing our march eastward towards Labiar, and followed by a very long train of Bedouin tribes, who having been unable to pay the expected tribute, were constrained to accompany the troops. This disorderly crowd of soldiers, shepherds, women and children, with a countless number of camels, sheep, and cattle of every description, brought to mind those ancient emigrations of whole nations, so frequently spoken of in history. Fortunately, the rich and fruitful soil of Labiar furnished ample subsistence for this motley host; and there we encamped in the evening of the fifteenth of March.

LETTER VIII.

LABIAR.

Beauty of the environs—Phenician juniper—the Bey's magnificence—his court of audience—customs, manners, and attire of the Bedouins—ostrich-hunting—interview with two Europeans—flight of the rebel.

Nothing can be more pleasing or delightful than the situation of Labiar, noted for its excellent and wholesome water contained in numerous wells of most antique formation, cut out of the live rock, frequently to the depth of above a hundred feet.

The summits of the surrounding hills being covered with the Phenician juniper, have a dark green hue particularly solemn and gloomy. This tree is doubtless the Thyēum of Pliny,[a] who describes it as peculiar to the interior of the Cyrenaica, and ventures to assert, that the wood which

[a] Pliny, lib. xiii. c. 6.

was burnt by Circe, for the purpose of perfuming her apartments, as mentioned by Homer, was the produce of this tree.

The pure and temperate air of these hills, and their very solitude itself, enlivened as it is by the beauties of nature, fill the soul with a sensation of pleasure and tranquillity beyond measure in harmony with the situation; nor can I wonder, that from this inexhaustible source of exquisite sensations, the Arabian tribes, who have in so many instances preserved the habits of patriarchal life, should derive such a strong disposition to wander about this charming scenery.

I know not whether these agreeable feelings had such influence over the mind of the Bey as to occasion an order of encamping here during some time, but I suspect that the appearance of prosperity among these tribes had by far the greatest share in his arrangements. Besides, as we were drawing nigh to the centre of the rebellion, he doubtless judged it expedient either to augment his army from some of the numerous hordes who wander among these hills, or keep them in submission by a display of his military force; for which purpose, he

held a sort of court, gathering round him the chieftains of the tribes, and exhibiting before these pastoral people every thing that could impress them with a high opinion of his power.

Two negroes mounted upon a camel, and beating an enormous drum with a rope, went round the country to invite the Bedouin chiefs to the Bey's quarters; and as this honourable distinction was coupled with an intimation that such as should neglect to attend would forfeit their heads; they immediately left their tents, repaired daily to our camp, had long audiences of the Bey, and accompanied him in all his excursions, assiduously posting themselves near him. With so much pomp did he appear, that he dazzled the minds of these simple and unpolished people, and not only inspired the chiefs with a great idea of his power and grandeur, but impressed the same upon the minds of all the neighbouring tribes, who daily repaired in crowds to the camp to enjoy so novel and brilliant an exhibition.

The Bey wore upon his head a large turban composed of the finest Persian shawls; a magnificent crimson coloured

mantle was thrown over his shoulders, an under garment of gold brocade upon a sky blue ground, breeches of rose coloured silk, and red boots, completed his apparel, which was ornamented with a profusion of gold fringe, cords, and embroidery, whilst large gold tassels hung down from the hem of his garments, and every part of his accoutrements. All his attendants displayed a proportionate degree of magnificence; and the show was indeed so sumptuous and splendid, that even I could not help being dazzled by it. Reviews, tilts, tournaments, and various military evolutions were daily exhibited when the weather permitted, and were really most magnificent and impressive.

When the troops marched out of the camp they were preceded by the chief camel-keeper, an officer of rank, holding a hatchet in his hand; near him was a Turkish Agà carrying the staff of command, surrounded by banners, and followed by a Sciaus, holding something like a crosier or pastoral staff; then appeared the Bey mounted upon a noble white charger richly caparisoned, surrounded by a band of music (called *Nubar*), and followed by

a corps of infantry and cavalry, and a train of artillery. The column was closed by an immense multitude of camels.

When the Bey gave public audience he was seated, or rather carelessly stretched upon a couch of red velvet, trimmed with gold lace, and placed at the bottom of his tent. Upon his right and left, seated upon carpets in regular gradation, appeared his relations, the superior officers of his army, and the chiefs of the Bedouins; behind them in a circle stood a file of Mamelukes, then a file of negroes, and lastly, a third file of Sciaus armed with muskets, which they held under their arms muzzle downward. The sentences pronounced by the Bey were executed in his presence instantly, and without appeal; and he not unfrequently added with his own hand more blows than he had originally ordered to be inflicted.

In this pompous display there was nothing different from the usages of the court at Tripoli; but the subjects which were discussed in this sort of council of state gave rise to the completest anarchy and confusion. The Bey was at every moment interrupted and contradicted by the Be-

douin chiefs, who in their turn were broken in upon by the courtiers, and the courtiers by the officers; and even the Mamelukes and negroes speedily interfered: so that at last all talked at once, bawling and screaming, and making such a noise and tumult as quite terrified me the first time I was present. Upon enquiring why the Bey encountered such opposition, and what was the cause of such clamorous discussion, I found that nobody knew, and all the answer I could get was, that they were reasoning and debating.

Living thus, in the midst of people, who retain the customs and habits of the early ages of mankind, I endeavoured to communicate with them, and learn something of their manners and dispositions. The first time I visited the tents of the Bedouins, the women and children fled; but being called to and encouraged by my guide, they began gradually to approach, and finally increased so, that I was soon surrounded by a crowd. I presume, that I was the first European whom the women had ever seen; for, after examining my attire, and laughing very heartily, their attention seemed absorbed by the gilt buttons of my

coat, and I soon found myself pulled from behind. The hardihood of one woman so much emboldened the rest, that I was very soon attacked by numbers, and my coat would have been torn to pieces if some men of their tribe, who had seen me at the Bey's, had not restrained them; still I left several of my buttons behind me. We parted however in perfect friendship, and with the liveliest expression of their hopes, that I would speedily repeat my visit; and early next morning they came to my tent in such numbers that I was awakened by their noise. They had, it seems, discovered that I was a physician; and, as that profession has probably here maintained the reputation it enjoyed in the time of Æsculapius, they came to me in the full persuasion of being relieved from their ailments. Nothing is so inconvenient as this reputation to a physician who does not wish to pass for either a sorcerer or a Marabout, these people requiring remedies not only for the diseases with which they are actually afflicted, but for those also by which they fear they may be attacked. They one and all asked for a recipe to prevent diseases of the eye which are very common

amongst them, arising from the damp vapours to which their mode of life, either in the open air, or under ill conditioned tents, particularly exposes them. The limbs of many of these people were full of inveterate sores, produced by the improper treatment of wounds.

I am at a loss how to account for these secluded tribes being acquainted with a disorder frequent in populous towns, and propagated by libertinism; but it is so prevalent amongst them, that many bear upon their countenances the disgusting traces of its ravages, and even their children, and the infants themselves, from daily intercourse with the diseased, become ulcerated, and frequently perish through ignorance and neglect.

Some cures which I had performed, so spread my good name among the tribes, that when I approached their tents they gathered round me, and eagerly testified their gratitude by every action and expression in their power. The women seated me amongst them, which is the highest honour they can shew a stranger; and whilst I partook of the milk they brought me in a bowl, they sang songs expressive

of their wishes for the perfect happiness of their guest. Many of the chiefs were desirous that I should settle amongst them; and to the promise of a drove of camels and of every thing necessary for a Bedouin's establishment; they added the proffer of their women. I should have thought less of the sincerity of this latter token of their liberality, if immediately, upon my entering one of their tents, the men had not respectfully withdrawn, and left me at full liberty with their women. It is true, indeed, that they find a safeguard against the desires of a European, as well in the complete ugliness of the women, as in the filth in which they live. They are wrapped up in a camlet cloak with a large hood, and fastened round the body with a belt; their heads are enveloped in a black woollen handkerchief, like a turban, leaving upon the forehead several locks of hair which meet their eyebrows, and are ornamented with glass beads; and the most opulent wear silver bracelets upon their arms and feet, and four large ear-rings of the same metal. I know not if these foot-ornaments have still the same signification as is transmitted to us by Herodotus,[a] importing

[a] Herod. lib. iv. 176.

that their number denoted that of their gallantries; but it is certain that I never observed the number of those ornaments to increase, although the soldiers were very assiduous in their visits to the tribes. The arms, legs, and chins of both men and women are covered with the most whimsical, and grotesque figures indelibly painted in black; the women also are for the most part accustomed to give a yellowish tinge to their nails with the juice of a plant which I conceive to be the *Lausonia inermis* of the botanists; and the lower eye-lashes are coloured black with the powder of the regulus of antimony, a practice prevalent among all the principal people in Barbary. Many, especially children, wear gold rings, set with pearls or glass beads, suspended from their nostrils; and their beautiful white teeth project over the bronze surface of their skin, which borders also a little upon yellow. They are slim and meagre; their gestures are very animated, and their countenances enlivened by black and sparkling eyes.

Spinning and weaving camlets are the ordinary occupations of the women, who

are very awkward at their work; and the art is so little improved, that the shape of their frame is exactly the same as when it was first invented. The piece of stuff which is woven upon it, looks more like matting than woollen cloth; but owing to the excellent quality of the materials, it is extremely soft, and feels like plush. They are equally backward and ignorant in the art of spinning and preparing the wool; for, seated upon the ground, they put a heap of wool under their feet, and seizing a tuft of it, pass it between their toes, pulling and tearing it upwards till they fasten it to a sort of spindle, round which they wind the coarse thick yarn, which they have procured by thus drawing the wool between their toes.

The men pass their lives in the most complete idleness, stretched out in their tents, or seated with their heads between their knees, incessantly chewing tobacco and small bits of natron, which they procure from the interior, and which I apprehend to be that singular species of carbonate of laminated soda, lately analysed by the ingenious Klaproth, who says it is

found two days journey from Fezzan, and annually brought in large quantities to Tripoli, as well as conveyed into the interior of Africa, being a considerable branch of trade. It is not a little remarkable that certain usages should be found long established amongst people who never had any intercourse; the carbonate of native soda from the lake of Salaguarilla, in the province of Venezuela, in America, is used by the inhabitants of that country in the mastication of tobacco, and in the preparation of the juice, called *Mò* or *Chimò*, extracted from the tobacco plant. Besides the copious discharge of saliva which it produces, it is said to calm as well as strengthen the nervous system, an effect so much to be desired in hot climates. I am ignorant how far this carbonate contributes to the effects produced by this mastication; but it is certain that all these chewers of tobacco cannot dispense with this singular kind of seasoning.

The fare of these Arabs might be greatly improved, by the game with which the mountains of the Cyrenaica abound; but pastoral life does not seem to be in unison with field-sports, and the only one they follow is the

chase of the ostrich, to which they are allured by the hopes of profit. This giant of the feathered tribe is found in the interior of the country, and wanders over the deserts which extend towards the extreme and eastern boundary of the lesser Atlas, a tract which the mounted Bedouin of the Cyrenaica traverses in a few days, carrying in his wallet the small stock of provisions for which he has occasion. The feathers dropped by the ostrich in the places it has frequented serve as guides to the pursuer. If the bird can discover him before he has time to fire, it flees with great precipitation, not rising in the air, which the heavy weight of its body prevents, but helping itself along with its wings, which it beats against the ground; and thus it runs on, often enveloped in a cloud of sand, until it can hide itself among some bushes. The Arab follows the ostrich at full speed, marks the spot where it is concealed, and remains upon the watch, secure of his prey; it being that bird's peculiar custom, constantly to come out of its hiding place at the very same spot where it went in. As soon as it is killed, it is fastened by its feet to the horse, and drawn several hours upon the

ground, it being a received opinion, that during that operation, the fat of the bird acquires some marvellous medical qualities, upon which account it is preserved, and used in every sort of ailment. The skin of the ostrich, with the feathers on, is carried to Bengasi for sale, and forms a considerable branch of the trade of that place.

The excessive and habitual filth of these Arabs was a severe penalty upon my curiosity and intercourse with them; a thick crust of dirt was the varnish of their furniture, and so entirely were their bodies covered with it, that the colour of the skin was perfectly undistinguishable. Whilst I was one day among a crowd of them, and near a well, I inquired why they were not cleaner about their persons, and would not enjoy the luxury of washing their bodies, or at least their hands and faces; but they replied, that their flocks would no longer follow them if they did so—a sufficient proof of the potent odours they send forth. Doubtless their lawgiver, Mahomet, intended to cure his followers of their filthy habits and propensities, by enjoining them to per-

form daily ablutions; but when people wish to evade the laws, the wiliness of man will easily discover the means; and thus the Bedouin, fond of the fetid varnish of his body, rubs himself with dry sand instead of water, because, says he, it must be indifferent to Mahomet whether sand or water pass through his hands.

During our encampment we were visited by Signor Giacomo Rossoni, brother to the British Vice-Consul at Bengasi, accompanied by a Maltese Captain, who came for the purpose of buying cattle for Malta. This incident was so agreeable to my feelings, amid these barbarous scenes, that though I had never before seen those strangers, I hastened towards them with transports of joy, and welcomed them, as if they had been my oldest and dearest friends; and I soon found that the meeting was equally prized by them, not having expected such a pleasure in these inhospitable regions. As the Bey was well aware that the money expended in purchases by these traders would either wholly or in part eventually fall into his hands, he seemed to share our mutual satisfaction, warmly

recommended them to my good offices, and even sent us some tea and coffee with the usual compliment, that the three Christian dogs might enjoy themselves.

Whilst the troops were making up for the hardships they had undergone upon the march, the Bey received intelligence, that the rebel, deserted by the greatest part of his followers, despairing of making head against his brother, and alarmed at the approach of a small body of troops detached to reconnoitre his movements, was on the point of decamping from Derna, and retreating towards Cairo, where, if pursued by our army, he was sure of being protected by his relation, the Pacha of that city. These tidings made the Bey uncertain what course to take; and the approach of summer not admitting of an inroad into a country destitute of provisions and water, it was, after a long discussion, decided to continue among the mountains till all the tribes should have paid their tribute, and to pass the summer at Grenna, the ancient Cyrene, abounding with water, and situated in the centre of all the other Arabian tribes that feed their flocks in the hilly districts of the Pentapolis.

In consequence of this determination orders were issued for the camp to break up on the following day; and my next letter will give you an account of our progress towards the illustrious capital of the Cyrenaica.

LETTER IX.

FROM LABIAR TO THE SEPULCHRE OF SIDY MHAMET-EMERI.

Elbenit—ancient forts—Zardes—Sire—peculiar style of architecture—houses and tombs in the solid rock—sepulchre of a sanctified Marabout—the sacrifice and offerings at his shrine by the Bey and his army—fertility of the Cyrenaica.

21st April.

It is impossible for me to express my feelings of delight when at the dawn of a most beautiful day I saw the tents struck, and every thing ready for our march towards a city so renowned among the ancients as Cyrene. I even fancied that the very hills we crossed, thickly covered with Phenician juniper, breathed something majestic and productive of the liveliest images of former times. After a march of four hours we descended into a verdant plain, surrounded by lofty hills, of a conic shape, picturesquely sprinkled with dark green shrubs rich in

foliage. Upon one of these hills I visited the noble remains of an ancient fort, now called Elbenit, of a square form, and measuring fifty-eight paces on each side. Some of the stones in the front bear evidence of having been instcribed with letters, certainly neither Greek nor Latin, but too much defaced and mutilated either to be copied or decyphered. Around the fort are several tombs, excavated in the rock; and all these ruins are frequented by swarms of wild pigeons, and a sort of partridge called *Alchata*, whose constant fluttering disturbs the solitude of the place. Beautiful green valleys open between the hills; and the Bedouins, allured by the rich pastures, and the abundance of refreshing water, wander from vale to vale with their flocks and herds.

We proceeded during several days amongst these hills and valleys, and always with that renewed delight which is produced by the inexhaustible varieties of landscape, and the ruins of ancient edifices, which at every step exhibit themselves as a portion of the annals of that powerful nation with which this tract of country once was peopled. Not a hill is to be seen that

is not crowned with vestiges of ancient fortresses, and not a ruined fortress that is not surrounded by sepulchres and houses, all formed out of the very bowels of the hill.

The nearer we approached Cyrene, the more striking was this peculiar kind of architecture; at Zardes, seven hours march from Elbenit, I began to observe some large masses like columns which had served to support a building, and had been formed by digging round them in the heart of the hill; and at Sire, eleven hours march from Zardes, I viewed with astonishment the number of cells into which an edifice, of one entire piece, cut out of the body of the hill, had been divided. After another hour's march to Slanta I remarked, in a very small compass, about two hundred cells excavated quite close to each other, and in the very heart of the mountain; nor was this singular kind of architecture as easily accomplished as if it had been executed in crumbling sandstone like that in the country adjacent to the gulph. The last beds of that conchylious sandstone cover the lowest hillocks of the Cyrenaica which incline westward towards the sea; but beyond them the crust of conglomerated sand

ceases, and the heart of these mountains consists of a compact chalk which has the usual hardness of all kinds of marble; and, though of secondary formation, and bearing frequent traces of shells, its grain is fine and often glitters like saline marble. It is of a yellowish colour, often porous like the travertine, and by long exposure to the air acquires, like the travertine, a reddish hue which renders these remains peculiarly agreeable to the eye. Such is the nature of the rock which prevails through all that part of the Cyrenaica visited by me, and in which the industry and power of the ancient nation once settled there, excavated both tombs and habitations.

25th April.

Upon this road is the sepulchre of the most renowned Marabout, Sidy Mhamet-Emeri, the fame of whose miracles is spreading far and wide. The whole army repaired to this mausoleum with the most profound devotion, covering its walls with offerings consisting of baskets of the finest dates and pistachio nuts, vessels full of butter, horse accoutrements, firelocks, sabres, and old stirrups. The Bey with great

solemnity sacrificed an ox, sprinkled its blood upon the floor of the sepulchre, distributed the meat, when broiled, amongst all his staff, myself excepted, because as an infidel I was deemed unworthy of such an honour. Being very curious to ascertain the effect produced by these offerings at the tomb of the Marabout, I dressed myself in the garb of a Mameluke, mixed with the crowd of devotees, and penetrated into the *sanctum sanctorum*, where I found a table better covered than any I had seen since I lived among these people. All the delicious productions of this fertile district were collected together in great abundance round the tomb of the departed saint; amid such a plenty of tempting objects, my eyes chiefly reposed upon a small basket full of the finest dates I had ever seen; and as the day's allowance of provisions had been but scanty, I stretched forth a sacrilegious hand and quickly emptied the basket. The next day the camp resounded with the report of the miracle performed by the deceased, who had thus accepted the offering of the pious; and it was even asserted by some that he had been heard in the very act of mastication.

The environs of the sepulchre appear to have been very thickly inhabited in remote times; for the ruins of dilapidated towns present themselves to view during several hours march. The totally deserted state of these districts does not prevent the traveller from being particularly struck with their extreme fertility, and he will more especially remark the vigorous appearance of the olive trees which spread spontaneously over vast tracts of country. The Bedouins, who use no other sauce than butter, not only set no value upon this tree, but from superstitious motives, prevent others from gathering its fruit and making oil, which, if sent by the way of Bengasi to the european market, would alone suffice to enrich the whole country. Gigantic fig, carob, pistachio, and wild pear trees grow and flourish among the olive trees; and the whole aspect of these regions, though left entirely without cultivation, conveys a greater idea of fertility than any of our best tilled provinces.

Struck as I frequently was with this extraordinary degree of fruitfulness, and with the pure and temperate quality of the air, and surrounded by so many testimonials of

the prosperous condition of the ancient inhabitants of the Cyrenaica, I was unable to comprehend why in the times of the crusades no power thought of occupying that exuberant territory with such a force, and such a colony, as might have maintained a firm footing there, and why they neglected the politic example of the great nations that successively reigned over the shores of the Mediterranean. For the Phenicians, the Carthaginians, the Greeks, and the Romans, by turns transported their surplus population to different parts of this extensive coast, so that wherever they might, from various causes, be induced to land, they were sure to find their kinsmen, language, habits, and religion.

The Italian mariner who now traverses the Mediterranean, trembles at the sight of every distant sail, in the uncertainty of its being friendly or piratical, and shudders every time the wind blows from the north, lest he should be driven upon these inhospitable shores, and there terminate his existence in captivity. Let us consider what obstacles may have induced different governments to decline such an undertaking as a settlement upon this productive coast.

It could not be the number or the power of a horde of vagabonds, the outcasts of other countries, and formidable only to the bare-footed pilgrims who cross the desert, and whom a handful of these undisciplined miscreants fill with apprehension, and drive before them like a flock of sheep. The multitudes which, as it has been supposed, would issue from the interior, exist only in imagination; for the belt of habitable country extending southwards from the Cyrenaica is extremely narrow and depopulated. The great bay of the Syrtis, and the desert of Sahara, which communicate with it, form a frontier too well fortified by nature, to be forced by any formidable body of those who inhabit the western coasts of Africa. Upon the Egyptian side are immeasurable deserts, as well as numerous defiles, which render it easy to defend the entrance of the Catabatmos; and along the coast, the country is inaccessible except by the ports of Tajuni and Apollonia, which might easily be fortified. With such barriers, and such means of security, what height of prosperity might not an european colony hope rapidly to reach, that should be established in this fertile territory, where pasture grounds and

the chase would alone furnish the first settlers with the ample means of subsistence.

Heaven forbid that in the recommendation of such a project, I should inculcate the idea of an european colony renewing against this pastoral people the harsh and sanguinary measures which have so frequently stained the conduct and reputation of new settlers; for I consider their preservation, and the maintenance of their habits and usages as essentially connected with the prosperity of a new colony, and with that branch of industry and commerce to which it should peculiarly devote its faculties. In my opinion, the nature of the soil and climate particularly points out the diligent cultivation of the vine, the olive, and the palm tree, which would alike cover the calcareous hills and sandy shores of the country. The luxuriant pasture grounds in the valleys would continue to be fed by the flocks and herds of the wandering tribes, who, protected in their property and habits, and profiting by the increasing produce of their cattle, would become the most faithful allies of the colony. The Cyrenaic wool was more esteemed by the ancients than any other, and I have no hesitation in

asserting that the wool of the present day greatly surpasses the very best we can produce, though now for want of local manufactories, and a foreign market, it is but little valued in this country.

A new colony would therefore be greatly interested not only in not molesting the present occupiers, but in religiously respecting their habits and customs; and doubtless their frequent intercourse with civilized people, and the divine influence of a religion, which has constantly humanized the most barbarous tribes among whom it has been introduced, would soften their minds, and gradually dispose them to more intimate and social connexions.

Neither do I think this plan liable to the reproach of being an unnatural grafting of a civilized colony upon a barbarous people. Due attention has not been paid to the political constitution of the ancient inhabitants of these countries, though much has been written about their wealth and prosperity, and their power and consequence are still proved at every step by the most splendid monuments. It is certain, however, that during the period when a Greek colony here flourished and multiplied, a

people of nomades wandered among the hills of the Cyrenaica, with numerous flocks and herds, and lived upon milk and flesh; and the picture left us of them by Herodotus is equally that of the Bedouins of our days, the real descendants of the old nomades. We learn as well from the same historian, as from the ancient geographers, that the portion of the Cyrenaica chiefly frequented by the wandering tribes of old, was precisely the maritime district, which, besides Cyrene, contained several splendid cities, as we may judge from the monuments which still attest the prosperous days of Berenice, Tochera, Ptolomæta, Barca, and Apollonia. It is therefore to be presumed, that those towns arrived at that degree of splendour principally in proportion to the advantages which the civilized population derived from the rich productions of the pastoral districts. I cannot help entertaining hopes that those sources of real opulence will one day give new life and vigour to this fine and interesting country, and afford fresh branches of industry and traffick to such maritime towns in Italy, as may be induced to form connexions with any new settlers.

LETTER X.

FROM THE SEPULCHRE OF SIDY MHAMET-EMERI TO SLUGHE.

Extensive ruins round Spaghe—copious springs of water—poisonous plant, presumed to be the Silphium—*removal to Slughe.*

Two roads lead from Sidy Mhamet-Emeri's sepulchre; the one partly along the coast, to Bengasi—the other in an easterly direction, across the most elevated part of the Cyrenaica, to Cyrene, the sea-side, and Derna. The collection of tribute from the Bedouins being now the chief object of our movements, we made frequent halts, and did not arrive at Slughe, three hours distant from Cyrene, until the second of May.

2d May.

The view of the hills, always varied and always picturesque, the delightful freshness of the air at this season, and the imagination continually kept in play by the ruins which we encountered at every step, ren-

dered this slow progress indescribably agreeable to my feelings. We first encamped at Spaghe, and found all the surrounding hills covered with the remains of spacious buildings and tombs. In one of my rambles amongst these hills, and near the ruins of a very ancient fort, I discovered a powerful spring of the most limpid water; and not far from it, close also to some dilapidated edifices, another spring rushed forth from the clefts in the calcareous rocks of which these mountains are composed. These being the first springs I had seen upon African ground, I hastened to communicate my discovery to the Bey, requesting him to accompany me, and enjoy a sight so perfectly novel to him; but, unacquainted as he was with the spouting out of water from the earth, and with the quality and nature of any other than well water, he laughed at my description, denied the possibility of the fact, and seemed to delight in classing me with the many hyperbolical narrators of such marvels.

These hills produce a flowering plant nearly resembling our artichoke, both in appearance and taste; the Bedouins eat the leaves of the cup, and our soldiers, fol-

lowing their example, found them so good as quickly to devour all they could find, so that I could scarcely procure one for my collection; and this having been unfortunately left in my tent, one of my slaves laid hands upon it, under pretence that I had purposely reserved it for him; and no other could I ever find.

Whilst we were encamped at Spaghe such a mortality took place amongst the camels as seemed to threaten their total destruction; the Bey and his followers began to be seriously alarmed; and the Marabouts in vain hung their mystic writings round the necks of the beasts, and whispered magic words in their ears. I was not long in perceiving that the malady was occasioned by the camels eating an umbelliferous plant, frequent in these pastures, with compound and indented leaves, fleshy, delicate, and shining, and without either partial or general involucrum. Its fruit, somewhat flattened, between round and oval, is surmounted in its length by three ribs, and furnished all round with a membrane or covering as light and glossy as silk. The flowers of all the plants I saw were already dead, which may prevent any

exact determination of its species; but, may it not be the famous *Silphium,* whose juice, extracted and prepared by the Cyreneans, and exported to foreign countries, formed a lucrative branch of their trade?

It is well known that the celebrity of this plant gave the name of *Silfifera* to the Cyrenaica,[a] and that the Cyreneans, jealous of this precious production of their soil, administered the revenue arising from it, upon the public account, and caused the figure of the plant to be engraved upon their coins, from the time of Battus their reputed founder. One of these coins, which, to its great rarity, adds the merit of extraordinary preservation, I now offer you,



it bears on one side the figure of the plant, with the inscription KOINON, and on the other, the head of Jupiter Ammon, who

[a] Callim. Hym. Herodot. lib. iv. 169. Strabo Geogr. lib. xvii.

was held in the greatest veneration by the Cyreneans. You will not expect to find upon this medal the characteristic traits of the *Silphium*; but to be able to ascertain by this monument, contemporary with the fame of that plant, the character of the family of plants to which it belongs, may reckon for something in the illustration of this article of botanical antiquities. In it you will perceive the physiognomy of an umbelliferous plant, by the compound leaves, by the broad sheath, whence the tail of the flower embraces the stem, and by the stem being deeply marked in parallel lines, and surmounted by a small globe or knot of flowers collected together in form of an umbel. Many of the umbelliferous plants shew their umbels in a globular form when the flower is just ready to expand; and precisely with that appearance is the umbel represented upon the medal; so that I am inclined to think, that at that period, when the plant is most provided with moisture, they extracted from its root the far-famed juice, and that the most favourable moment for obtaining it in perfection was thus publicly indicated by the ex-

pression of the form assumed by the plant at that epoch.

To this first sketch of the *Silphium* from this silfiferous coin, let us add other features transmitted to us in different parts of his works by the Greek botanist Theophrastus, and perfectly coinciding with the species I have seen. "The *Silphium*,"[a] he says, "has a thick, fleshy root, perennial "and medicinal: its stem is formed like "that of the Papyrus and the Ferula, and "equals this last in thickness. They call "its leaves μασπετον,[b] and they resemble those "of the Selinum or Macedonian parsley; "its seed is broad and foliaceous, like that "of the Scolopendria. It is found at "Cyrene, and principally in the environs "of the Syrtis, near the garden of the "Hesperides."

[a] Theophrasti Historia Plant. lib. iv. lib. vi. passim.

[b] This word μασπετον is to be found only in Theophrastus, and in that passage only. No one has hitherto understood its signification, although some have endeavoured to translate it, and their translation has been inserted in more than one Lexicon. The celebrated English botanist, Stackhouse, prudently abstains from translating it in the valuable illustrations contained in his most elegant edition of Theophrastus Περὶ φυτῶν; but, as if in doubt, he adds, "*Vox Syriaca?*"

I have already said, that the Cyreneans extracted the juice of this plant from its root, an assertion, which perhaps will be disputed by many, and especially by such as trust to the Latin translation of Strabo,[a] where, speaking of the Cyrenean juice, he is made, by his translator, to say "*Quem Sil-* "*phium expresso et coagulato succo dat.*" But Strabo was satisfied with saying, "ὃν ἐκφέρει τὸ Σίλφιον ὀπισθέν," which passage does not bear Buonacciuoli's interpretation, "*which is* "*collected from the* SILPHIUM, *when cut.*" By the word ὀπισθεν, it is evident that Strabo referred to the juice, which, being produced by the root without further process, was therefore the most valued. Theophrastus[b] also says, that the *Silphium* was provided with a double portion of moisture, that of the body, and that of the root.

For the eminent medical virtues of this plant I refer you to Pliny, although, according to his custom, he doubtless exaggerated some, and adopted others from report; but I cannot believe that the constant and general use which was made of its juice, would have left it in quiet posses-

[a] Strabo Geogr. lib. xvii.

[b] Theophr. Hist. Plant. lib. vi. 2.

sion of a false reputation; and still less can I persuade myself that a medicine of no account would have generally fetched its weight in silver, or have been kept in the public treasury with the gold and silver, and sold for the service of the state, as was done by order of Julius Cæsar when making preparations for war.[a]

I am aware that this plant nearly disappeared from the Cyrenaica after the invasion of that country by the neighbouring tribes of barbarians;[b] and I even remember to have read that only one was found there in the time of Nero, and sent to him as a great rarity. But the translators and commentators upon the ancient writers who have mentioned the *Silphium,* have, from their ignorance of botany, contributed more than its rarity, to envelop the subject in obscurity and doubt. Instead of retaining the name of *Silphium,* by which it is always mentioned by Strabo and other authors, every one endeavoured to substitute that which he thought most suitable; there were not wanting some who applied these different names to as many different plants; and some have even considered the Cyre-

[a] Plin. lib. xviii. 3. [b] Strabo, lib. xvii.

nean juice and the *Silphium* to be two distinct productions. Buonacciuoli sometimes translates *Silphium* to signify balsam, sometimes Angelica, and sometimes Benzoin; nor am I disposed to adopt the opinion of Sprengel, however authoritative upon such subjects —that the *Silphium* is that species of plant known to botanists as the "*Ferula tingi-* "*tana.*" Now I can, from personal observation, affirm, that the *Ferula tingitana* is found only at a considerable distance from the Cyrenean hills. It is certain that all the ancients agreed in considering the Cyrenaica as the peculiar and native country of the *Silphium;* and we learn also from Theophrastus, that this plant was inconceivably averse to every other soil, and could not be transplanted with impunity. Soils rarely change their native productions, and never till after a long series of years, especially when neglected as much as this is; it would be strange therefore that the very country which the ancients called silfiferous should no longer produce the *Silphium,* and that that plant should have changed its habitation, and migrated into countries, which, in former times, were not silfiferous.

I am unable either to contradict or confirm the truth of the methods indicated by Pliny for distinguishing this plant, which, he says, puts the sheep to sleep, and causes the goats to sneeze, which partake of it.* To the attempts of the nomades to eradicate it on account of its poisonous qualities, that author partly ascribes its rarity in his time; and the destructive effects of the plant at Spaghe upon our camels, confirm this fresh trait of its resemblance to the *Silphium*. The certitude derived from the figure of the *Silphium* upon the medal, that this plant is umbelliferous, and the not having found here any other plant but this, which, amongst the umbelliferous, could with any propriety be taken for the *Silphium*, and which here flourishes in the very centre of the old silfiferous district, unite in confirming me in the opinion, that the plant found by me in the Spaghe pasture-grounds, is the true and genuine *Silphium* of the Cyrenaica.

It not being difficult to persuade the Bey, that the only method of saving the remainder of the camels was to remove to pastures free from the plant which had been

* Plin. lib. xviii. 3.

so fatal to them, our immediate departure was resolved upon, and we encamped the next day at Slughe, near two springs of excellent water. No poisonous plants existing there, the mortality among the camels ceased; the two fountains, though not very copious, were the constant topics of the Bey's admiration; and the humidity of the soil in these hilly districts contributing, with the elevated temperature of the air, to the promotion of vegetation, it was finally decided that we should fix our permanent head-quarters in the midst of these fresh and delightful pasture-grounds.

LETTER XI.

FROM SLUGHE TO CYRENE.

Noble remains of antiquity—forts—aqueduct —inscriptions—small well-preserved temple —situation of Cyrene—its solemn scenery.

IF I had never read or heard of Cyrene, the majestic ruins scattered on every side would have announced the approach to some great and dilapidated city, and have powerfully excited my curiosity. Our camp was only three hours march from Cyrene; but the certainty of assassination by the first Bedouin I should meet, would have checked my eagerness, if the Bey had not been so considerate as to grant my request of an escort, on condition of my remunerating the two Sciaus appointed to protect me.

You must expect to find this letter full of the descriptions of ruined edifices, dilapidated forts, sarcophagi and sepulchres hollowed out of the solid rock; for such is

the ordinary decoration of all the roads leading to Cyrene. The number of the forts upon the hills is so great as to raise a doubt whether they were the abodes of the rich and powerful, places of refuge against sudden attacks by the wandering tribes, or regular strong holds for the general defence of the district.

The surface of the country is scattered over with madrepores, of very remote origin; they are neither adherent to the soil, nor fixed in the calcareous rock of which the hills are composed, but are spread about in detached pieces, and are probably the remains of that marine alluvial soil which entirely covers the skirts of these masses of testaceous chalk, and occasionally shews itself in isolated crusts, even upon the most elevated parts of the Cyrenaica.

An hour before we reached Cyrene, the ground of the lowest ramifications of the heights was covered for about a mile with vast and noble remains of buildings; and the heart of the hills was excavated into tombs and sarcophagi. These ruins were picturesquely embellished and enlivened by flowery clusters of the Oleander *(Nerium Oleander, Linn.)* called by the Bedouins,

Safsaf, a name which they apply also to the site occupied by these remnants of antiquity. The most conspicuous amongst these interesting vestiges is a very capacious aqueduct, extending towards Cyrene, and in its progress occasionally exhibiting its remains upon the surface of the ground. One half of it is cut in the solid rock, and the other half is raised upon arches, united by beautifully wrought stone, disposed so as to form a succession of parallel courses. Observing that a letter of an alphabet I was unacquainted with, was cut upon each stone within the channel of the aqueduct in such a manner as to form, by regular series, one direct line, each line being repeated upon every course of stone, I entered the aqueduct, and endeavoured to copy the letters; but the little light that glimmered through the broken parts of the aqueduct, the stagnant water in it, and the inconvenient posture necessary for the examination of the letters, formed insuperable obstacles to my wishes and efforts. Although these, like other inscriptions upon these ruins, belong to languages which are now lost, I have not judged it useless to copy them whenever I had an opportu-

nity; for besides, that these letters may possibly furnish some elementary insight into the alphabets of those languages, however obscure; they are so many authentic documents of nations of different tongues who successively resided here. They are equally important also from their utility, in preventing us from yielding entirely to the authority of the Greek writers, who, biassed by vanity, and an excessive attachment to their own nation, could not refrain from ascribing every trace of civilization to a Greek origin, and finding in the Cyrenaica nothing but a people of Greeks descended from the colony of Tera.

Among these ruins are innumerable basins and canals, which were probably supplied with water from the great aqueduct. Towards the west, the walls of a small square temple are still standing, with its entrance perfectly preserved, and ornamented with fluted three quarter columns with Corinthian capitals. The pediment is embellished with a bas relief, representing little boys supporting a vine loaded with grapes; and vestiges of a lofty wall are discoverable round this little temple, which probably was constructed within a larger.

Quitting these venerable remains, and continuing to ascend among the hills, I gained the summit of a mountain about five hundred metres above the level of the Mediterranean, and was forcibly struck with the scene which lay before me. It was a very extensive plain covered, as far as the eye could reach, with an immense quantity of ruins; the ground was thickly strewed with the remains of towers and walls, confused heaps of fragments rose on every side, long streets or highways flanked with sepulchres were every where distinguishable; and whichsoever way I turned, I saw such vast masses of dilapidated structures as sufficiently proved the antique existence of some great and splendid city. Thick clusters of cypresses overshadowing some of the tombs, increased the melancholy aspect of this singular scene; and some Bedouin tents pitched among these venerable monuments of antiquity, forcibly brought to my mind the long interval of destructive time, which divides the present age from those which are long since past. Such was the effect produced upon my mind by the ancient and dilapidated metropolis of the Cyrenaica, situated, as you will

have observed, upon an extensive platform upon the summit of the mountains of the Pentapolis, thus perfectly illustrating the exactitude of the Greek geographer,[a] who says that he had seen it from the sea, apparently as if raised upon a sort of table.

I had passed an hour in the general survey and deep contemplation of this solemn scenery, and was preparing to inspect it in its various details, when my escort earnestly exhorted me to return to the camp, observing, that the sun was declining, and that with so small a force it would not be safe to remain among the mountains in the dusk; I therefore desisted from further researches, with the intention of resuming them on the morrow.

[a] Strabo Geogr. lib. xvii.

LETTER XII.

FROM THE FOUNTAIN OF CYRENE.

The ancient streets of Cyrene—aqueducts—reservoirs of water—remains of Roman magnificence—celebrated fountain—inscriptions—sepulchres—painted ceilings—fertile plain—caverns inhabited by an independent race—Strabo's description of the country—the ancient Lotophagi—port of Apollonia—its majestic ruins—flesh-coloured sand.

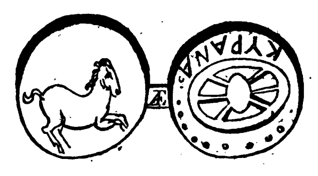
YOU have heard, perhaps, from some travellers in Barbary, of the belief prevalent in that country, that a petrified city exists in this part of Africa; and certainly the first aspect of Cyrene may very well have given rise to such an idea, in the mind of some ignorant or visionary traveller.

I have just been walking along what was probably one of its most considerable streets, cut out of the solid rock, and flanked by a long succession of square sepul-

chres about ten feet in height, excavated also in the rock. Amongst them are some of much larger dimensions, constructed of hewn stone, covered in, and as far as the effects of time and weather allow me to judge, probably surmounted by statues. Several rows of niches, destined to receive the mortal remains of the deceased, are cut on two sides of the interior walls of these sepulchres. Upon the rocky side of one of the streets I found the word ΙΠΠΙΚΟΣ engraved in large characters; and although this inscription naturally gives rise to a conjecture that this street was particularly appropriated to races, the wheel-ruts deeply cut in the rocky soil could not fail of exciting both surprise and consideration. The Cyreneans were extremely eminent for their equestrian talents, and especially for their skill in charioteering,[a] in both which exercises they so far excelled all the neighbouring nations, that they sought to perpetuate the fame of this national preeminence by medals, one of which, found among these ruins, I carefully preserved, having on one side a wheel, with the scarcely legible word

[a] Strabo, lib. xvii. Pindar. Od. iv. v. 13. Xenophon, lib. vi. Diod. lib. xvii. s. 49.

KYPANA, and upon the reverse a horse gallop-ing.



I have since ascertained that not only this but all the streets which remain open to view in the vicinity of the town are deeply marked with ruts, which the nature of the stone, and the solitude of the place have united to preserve.

The water which fell at Cyrene during the rainy season, appears to have been collected and conveyed through various channels in the streets to spacious basins excavated at no great distance on each side. This attention to the distribution of water, and the numerous reservoirs, aqueducts, and basins, observable not only among the ruins of the city, but upon the declivities of the surrounding hills, induce me to think that whatever waters fell upon the heights, and whatever flowed from the soil, were alike carefully collected, preserved, and distributed as occasion might require.

North of the town is a hill, the lower part of which towards the south is covered

with magnificent ruins of long and lofty walls entirely exposed to view, fragments of columns, and other vestiges of some stupendous building. Upon a piece of wrought stone, half buried in the rubbish, I decyphered the following words cut in large characters,

.ORTICVS ~ CAESAREI
US ~ M ~ F ~ PACILAEUS

and the surrounding remains of a superb edifice are in harmony with the form of a portico. If the inscription had not revealed the origin of this architecture, the introduction of granite and foreign marble, never as I conceive, adopted by the Cyreneans, would have proved it to be a work of the Romans.

Not far off lay the fragment of a statue, which notwithstanding the injuries it has received, evidently represented a person in a tunic, seated; near it was a pedestal upon which it probably was placed; and upon one side of the pedestal was the following inscription:

ΚΛΑΙΔΙΑΝΑΡΑΤΑΝΦΙΛΓΣΚΩ
ΘΥΓΑΤΕΡΑΦΥΣΕΙΛΕΕΥΦΑΝΕΥΣ

ΜΑΤΕΡΑ ∿ ΚΑ-ΟΛΥΜΠΙΑΔΟΣ
ΑΙΩΝΙΩΓΥΜΝΑΣΙΑΡΧLΔΟΣ
ΑΡΕΤΑΣΕΝΕΚΑ ∿ ΚΥΡΑΝΑΙΟΙ

Σ..ΑΥ..ΙΑ
Ε Ο ΙΑΣ
Ι



Upon quitting this part of the hill, and turning towards the east, the calcareous rock which forms its skeleton, appears perpendicularly cut down upon two sides, and nearly at the foot of one of them, out of a large oval aperture, gushes one of the most copious streams of water I ever beheld. The mouth of this fountain is very ingeniously excavated, and is connected with a tunnel extending far into the heart of the hill, into which I penetrated a few yards, notwithstanding the assurances of my guides that it was the usual residence of malignant spirits: but instead of any evil results, I found that the coolness of the subterraneous passage, and the murmuring of the water, most grateful to my ears, seemed to give fresh strength to my body, and new vigour to my mind. Upon coming out of the ca-

vern, I observed the following inscription upon one side of its rocky walls:

ΛΙΓΔΥΟΝΥΣΙΟ·ΣΥΣΟΤΑ
ΙΕΡΕΙΤΥΕΟΝΤΑΝΣΡΑΝΑΝ
Ε ΓΕ ·ΥΚΕΥΑΣΕ

This was the far-famed fountain of Cyrene, towards which a colony of Greeks, upon the faith of the oracle of Apollo, directed its steps in search of a new settlement; and to the murmur of these waters did the Muse of Callimachus sing the exploits of that god, and the Bath of Pallas.

Every thing in the neighbourhood of this fountain inspires an awful sensation, heightened by the antique remains of edifices, which rising majestically from the ground, seduce the imagination to sketch the outline of some noble and magnificent temple.

If I had possessed the proper means of digging and excavating among these ruins, I should doubtless have found numberless articles equally valuable for their antiquity, and for their merit as works of art; but the Bedouins are so averse to all such researches, that it was impossible to think of such an undertaking. You must therefore be satisfied with such inscriptions as I

thought best worth copying. The following was upon a handsome pedestal which lay prostrate among the ruins:

.........ΙΡΑΙΩ...
....ΠΙΣΟΕΝΕΥΣ......
ΙΠΚΛΑΥΔΙΟΣΣΑΡΑ..Ι..
ΝΟΣΥΙΟΣΠΑΓΚΑΠΣ
ΤΙ·ΚΛΑΥΔΙΟΣΙΣΤΡ...Σ
ΦΙΛΙΣΚΟΥ
ΤΙ·ΚΛΑΥΔΙΟΣΑΣΚΛΑΠΟΣ
ΦΙΛΙΣΚΟΥ
Ι...ΣΙΝΙΟΣ...ΙΑΩΝΟ
ΙΟΣ ΕΥΙΡΑΝΩ
...ΛΑΥΑΙΟΣ ΤΙΚΑ....

Upon the western front of this hill is a deep and wide chasm, in whose rugged sides several tombs have been excavated; and from the bottom of the chasm issue two copious springs, one of which flows among enormous blocks of stone, the other appearing to have been formerly diverted into an aqueduct. Upon two square blocks of wrought marble, near these fountains, I found and transcribed the two following inscriptions:

ΚΛ·ΒΕΝΟΣΤΑ·ΚΛ·ΚΑΡΠΣΟΕΝΟΥ
ΜΕΛΙΟΡΟΣΘΥΓΑΤΗΡ
ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΝΕΚΤΩΝΙΔΙΩΝ
ΣΥΝΤΩΝΑΩ·

ΑΡΙΣΤΙΣΦΙΛΩΝ....
ΓΟΡΓΟΣΟΩ ΜΑΡΧΟ
ΒΙΜΒΩΝΛΑΤΙΟΥ
ΑΡ.ΣΤΙΔΛΛΙΑΔΑ
ΣΤΦΑΞΩΝΑΡΙΣΤΕΑ
ΝΡΟ..ΑΝΓ.Σ.ΡΝΙΟΔ.ΩΡΟΥ
ΦΙΛΩΝΟΕ ΥΤΙΜΩ
ΠΑΤΑΛΣΟΕΑΡΙΣΤΙΩΝΟΣ
ΔΑΜΟΣΤΡΑΤΟΣΑΓΗΣΑΡΧΩ
ΙΠΙ...ΚΟ..ΑΤΟ Λ Α
ΣΩ.ΙΑΣΠΦΑΤΙΟ.Σ
ΦΙΛΩΝΑΓΑΟΩΝΟΣ
ΕΧΟΑΤΙΑΝΑΥΤΟΦΙΛΟ
ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΩ
ΑΛΕΣΑΝΑΡΟΣΑΙΗΣΙΟΣ
ΘΡΧΓΕΘ.ΧΙΣΡΙΡΑΡΟΛΑ
ΙΑ.ΩΙΝΧΙΡΑΥΒΑ
ΔΑΜΣΛΕΥΚΑΣΠΙΦΣ
ΔΕΞΙΣΙΕΡ.ΓΓΥΩ
ΑΛΕΞΙΜΑΧΟΣΚΟΜΑΤΑ
ΔΙΛΟΚΩ ΜΟΣΑΡΙΣΤΑΡΧΩ
Ω
ΣΥΝΝΑΙΩΝΑΙΣΩΝΟΣ
ΧΕΦΑΛΙΩΝΑΥΤΟΚΑΙ.Υ
..ΕΜΙ..ΩΝΑΡ..ΤΟ..ΙΝΞ..
ΣΟΕΝΩΝΧΑΨΙΚΛΕΥΣ..
ΣΥΗΟΙΔΑΣΕΠΙΓΕΝ..Ν..
..ΡΙΝΥ..ΓΟΣΙΙΛΟΝΩΜΟ...
....ΠΟ...ΟΑΛ.......
..ΕΝΟΝΙΠ..ΟΜ.......
....ΙΣ.........

Crossing this breach in the hill, and having the sea in front, just where the hill faces the north, I observed that its lowest branch extended from east to west, and

formed a long plain elevated about four hundred metres above the level of the Mediterranean, and supported by rocks precipitous and full of caverns. The other part of the hill, which rises about two hundred metres from the verge of the plain, is cut down almost perpendicularly, and is so entirely excavated and formed into sepulchres, from the summit to the base, as to give it the air of an immense building, the apertures of the tombs having the appearance of open windows. This perforated surface seems to have been decorated with galleries and arcades, which served to render every part of it accessible. I visited several of these sepulchres, and found them considerably damaged, having been much worse treated by the rapacious hands of men than by the effects of time, or the inclemency of the seasons. The ceilings of some were plaistered and painted with garlands of leaves, serpents entwined, and other ornamental emblems; and in the few remnants of these decorations, the colouring was so singularly fresh, as to seem rather invigorated than enfeebled by time. Inscriptions are still to be seen in front of all the tombs

but so defaced as to render it almost impossible to decypher them.

Leaving these mansions of the deceased, I traversed the plain extending from the northern skirts of the hill as far as the sea, a tract of land most fertile by nature, which in the prosperous days of Cyrene was probably irrigated by the waters from its fountains, and which still in their neglected state filter through in different directions, and assist the vegetation. If the ancient inhabitants of this country were as laborious and skilful in tilling the soil as in excavating the rocks and hills, these plains must have been of the most luxuriant fertility and unparalleled vegetation.

The northern border of this plain, inclining to the sea, is in different places cleft into deep ravines, in whose sides are many caverns picturesquely overshadowed by evergreens. These holes are inhabited by a race of people who there find a secure asylum against the aggressions of the Bedouins, and the tyrannical measures of the Pacha's agents. This state of independence in the very centre of the most perfect slavery, has great attractions for these mo-

dern troglodytes, and they have multiplied so much as to people all the rocky hills which hang over the sea in the northern part of the Cyrenaica, where they may be seen skipping like goats from cliff to cliff, in the enjoyment of idleness and security.

The position of this level tract, between the more elevated part of the Cyrenaica, and that where the hills gently incline towards the sea, recals to mind the picture which the ancient historians have transmitted to us of the extreme fertility of this country. "The Cyrenean district," says Herodotus,[a] "which is the highest part of Lybia, and is inhabited by the nomades, unites in itself three seasons worthy of remark. The maritime part abounds at a certain period, with productions ready for the harvest and the vintage; then comes the harvest of the middle region, which is equally productive, and is called the district of the hills; and when it is terminated there, the third region is found alike fruitful in produce ready to be gathered in; so that when the first crop is consumed, the second is ready, and the harvest of the Cyreneans lasts about eight months."

[a] Herod. lib. iv. 199.

As I shall soon have occasion to speak of the garden of the Hesperides, I defer enumerating the productions of these favoured regions, and shall only observe here, that the olive and the cypress trees mentioned by Theophrastus,[a] as of extraordinary beauty in the Cyrenaica, still flourish there with such vigour and luxuriance as I never saw any where surpassed. That the vineyards were formerly most extensive and productive, may be gathered not only from the nature of the soil, and an aspect peculiarly favourable to the vine, but from the above passage in Herodotus, and especially from the traces of the worship of Bacchus, frequently and clearly discoverable among these numerous remnants of antiquity.

The mode of cultivation in the Cyrenaica may be accurately gathered from Strabo, if we make a trifling alteration in Buonacciuoli's edition of the passage which relates to it. He makes Strabo[b] say, that in the maritime part of the Cyrenaica where the garden of the Hesperides is fabled to have existed, the palm tree flourishes, and water is abundant, and that for about one hundred stadia upon the acclivity of the hills,

[a] Theophr. Hist. Plant. lib. iv. 3. [b] Strabo, lib. xvii.

the soil produces a considerable number of trees, but that during the next hundred stadia the ground is only sown, and, *being dry, produces rice*—σπείρεται μόνον[a] ὀρυζοτροφεῖ δ' ἡ γῆ διὰ τὸν αὐχμόν. The inhabitants of the west and muddy rice grounds of Lombardy would surely smile at this passage, which I have translated literally from Buonacciuoli; and I am surprised that the learned commentators, who bestow so much praise upon the Almengoven edition, and who are in general so difficult and disputatious, should have silently glided over this passage about "*rice growing in a dry soil.*" I at first suspected that Strabo might intend to speak of a kind of rice mentioned by some modern travellers as growing without the aid of water; but I have since ascertained that neither Strabo nor the Cyreneans, nor yet the Greeks had any knowledge of any other kind of rice than the common sort, which, Theophrastus says, lives a long while in water. By altering one single

[a] Casaubon discovered in the MSS. μονον instead of μαλλον; and this μονον, which in my opinion is the true reading, is unjustly banished to the margin, and risks being omitted in a new edition of Strabo.

word in Strabo, every incongruity disappears, and the description becomes conformable to the nature of the country; for by substituting ὀλίγοτρεφει for ὀρυζοτροφει, we should thus translate the passage: "but, during "the next hundred stadia, the ground is "only sown, and being dry, its produce is "but scanty." By this reading, the "rice "upon a dry soil" disappears; the elevated parts of the Cyrenaica, which, for want of water, cannot bear either the palm trees of the maritime district, or the trees of the middle region, are described as sown only with corn; and I am convinced that an accurate examination of the old manuscripts would confirm my opinion.

From the days of Homer, to the present time, much has been said about a singular race of people called Lotophagi, who dwelt in rocky caverns round the lesser Syrtis, and derived their whole sustenance from the Lotus. The sweet fruit of that plant, which made the companions of Ulysses[a] so far forget their Ithaca, that force became necessary to make them quit those fatal shores, has long been the subject of botanical discussions and researches. The cele-

[a] Homer, Odyssey.

brated botanist Des Fontaines, not long since imagined, that he had found upon the very spot indicated by Homer, not only the plant in question, in the *Rhamnus Lotus, Linn.*, but the very posterity of the ancient Lotophagi in the present inhabitants of the rugged borders of the lesser Syrtis, who live upon the Lotus. I am inclined to think, that although the people just described as dwelling in caverns upon the Cyrenean coast, and whom I consider as the Lotophagi of the Cyrenaica, are different from those of the lesser Syrtis, still they are of no less ancient origin; for, though I will not positively assert that they are of the race immortalized by Homer, I am disposed to maintain that they belong to those people mentioned by Herodotus, as inhabiting that part of the territory of the *Gindani* which advances into the sea; for that country is described by the historian as lying to the east of the *Ciniphus;* and there is, upon that side of the gulph, no part of the coast which advances into the sea except that of the Cyrenaica, ἀκτὴν δὲ προέχουσαν ἐς τὸν πόντον.[a] My interpretation of Herodotus is confirmed by Strabo, who, speaking of

[a] Herod. lib. iv. 176.

the Lotophagi, says, that they inhabited places above Cyrene.[a] Fortified by such authority, I am now inclined to advance, that Homer intended to refer to those Lotophagi, and those only who were afterwards described by Herodotus and Strabo; and that the Lotophagi of the lesser Syrtis have usurped and despoiled the others of the honour of a visit from Ulysses. For that hero being, according to the ninth book of the Odyssey, arrived off Cape Malea with a favourable gale, and full of hopes that after doubling the Cape he should soon reach his native country, was assailed by a northerly wind, which forced him to alter his course, and after a navigation of ten days, drove him upon the coast of the Lotophagi, where he landed in search of water. Now, upon examining a chart of the Mediterranean coast, you will perceive that Ulysses, assailed as he was by a north wind off Cape Malea, could not be driven to the lesser Syrtis, but might easily be blown upon the coast of the Cyrenaica, which lies to the south of that Cape; and the very circumstance of his landing in quest of water furnishes another argument in favour

[a] Strabo, lib. iii. 65-66.

of my opinion. All these coincidences should long since have settled this point of Homerical geography; but the Cyrenean Lotophagi have continued unknown and neglected in their caverns, whilst those of the lesser Syrtis have been mentioned by several ancient and modern authorities, and have frequently signalized themselves in our days, by emerging from their dens, and ravaging the neighbouring districts.

There is a mixture of truth and fiction in all the ancient accounts of the Lotophagi. Strabo says, that the use of the Lotus prevented thirst, which, he adds, was very fortunate for them, as they had no water to drink; an assertion which, if it had not been contradicted by Homer, would now be so by my observation of numerous streams of limpid water pouring down the rocks, and supplied by the more elevated regions of the Cyrenaica. With regard to the ancient Lotophagi having subsisted upon the Lotus alone, it may be remarked, that the modern inhabitants of the Cyrenean rocks and caves have materially deviated from the practice of their forefathers; for the chief part of their food consists in honey, of a delicious flavour, which they collect upon the

ridges of their rocks, whither great swarms of bees are attracted by the sweets of perpetual spring, and the little rivulets which trickle down the rocks. They exchange the surplus of their honey with the Bedouins for butter, barley-meal, and woollen garments; and it is said, that though the two people differ materially in their customs and habits, this trading intercourse sometimes gives rise to intermarriages among them.

Descending one of the ravines which open from the plain towards the sea, and along which flow the united waters of the streams I have described, I found myself, in three hours, upon the shore of the gulph. To the west were some very lofty cliffs, which rising perpendicularly from the water's edge, render the coast inaccessible as far as Cape Ras-Sem; and to the east was a very narrow beach almost blocked up by immense fallen fragments of the overhanging rocks which seem to form the base and pedestal of the Cyrenaica.

Proceeding along this rocky shore, I arrived in three hours, at Apollonia, an ancient sea-port of the Cyreneans, situated in a bay formed by high cliffs precipitously

inclining from the elevated plains of Cyrene towards the beach, and rendering it inaccessible by land, except along the ravines which occasionally open upon the shore from the lofty and rugged heights. A succession of rocks projecting into the sea from east to south-west, probably served as the base of the ancient mole which on that side protected the port; and upon the remains of this mole are the vestiges of buildings, of which some also are seen rising out of the water just beyond the ridge of rocks, and about the third of a mile from the shore. Upon the beach are some ruins of houses, and the remains of a handsome flight of steps very near the sea. Several columns of Pentelic marble, still entire, lie prostrate upon the ground; and large blocks of wrought granite, and a few arches yet standing, are among these noble relics of antiquity. Near the hill are the remains of an aqueduct which conveyed water to the town; and upon several of the stones are the following inscriptions, which, though defaced by time, serve as records of the power of the Romans, and of their frequent visits to this port.

AD..CAES...EV.....

TI....DEM.....CVMIC....

AEDV....

CVN....

Greek inscriptions are also to be found here among the different ruins; and upon a large stone near the sea I discovered an inscription in strange and whimsical letters, which it was very troublesome to copy, but which may serve as a memorial of the people who at various periods frequented or ruled over the port of Apollonia.[a] Its position still affords a safe asylum to the Cyrenean tribes when pursued by the bands of robbers, who dwell near the gulph of Bomba, and sometimes extend their preda-

[a] The following characters are published by the author, with his Narrative, without clearly indicating whence he obtained them; but, as they most probably form the inscription abovementioned, they are here submitted to the attention of the learned reader.

tory incursions as far the mountains of the Cyrenaica.

This port is called by the Arabs, Marza-Susa; but that it was the ancient Apollonia is evident, as well from its magnificent remains as from its position, which coincides with that laid down by the old geographers; being one hundred stadia from Naustadmos,[a] one hundred and sixty from the promontory *Phycus*, and eighty from Cyrene.[b]

I will not quit Apollonia without mentioning the flesh-coloured sand upon its shore, which, after close examination, I found to proceed from a species of the minutest coral, dispersed among the sand in such abundance as to form about a third of the whole quantity, shewing itself sometimes in irregular fragments, and sometimes in smally knotty lumps, not larger than a grain of millet, in some of which are distinguishable short and twisted little branches, which look as if they had been perforated with some fine instrument. Is this the common coral (*Isis nobilis*) at its first formation, which, by the violence of the waves has been detached from these rocks where

[a] Scill. Perip. [b] Strabo, lib. xvii.

it is known to abound, or, is it a pigmy and nondescript species? You will see, by the parcel of sand I send you, that besides the coral, it is chiefly composed of the most minute testaceous productions, both univalve and bivalve, perfectly entire, and of such decided forms, as to make me think them as much arrived at their complete developement, as those of the same dimensions found by Soldani, in the hills of Sienna. Finally, having put half an ounce of the sand of Apollonia, and the same quantity of the very finest sand of the gulph of Syrtis, into some nitric acid; the latter remained nearly unaltered, but the former was almost wholly decomposed; an experiment, which confirms me in the opinion, that the sand at the bottom of the gulph of the great Syrtis, has its origin in the interior of Africa.

LETTER XIII.

FROM CYRENE.

Caverns—stalactites—Mahometan insensibility to the productions of nature—shells upon the summits of the Cyrenean mountains—movements of the rebel—timid conduct on both sides—the Bey's astonishment at the fountain of Cyrene—his whole army encamps near it.

I FREQUENTLY visited Cyrene, for the purpose both of inspecting the ruins, and examining the nature of the soil. I have already said, that the rock which forms the kernel of the mountains of the Pentapolis is compact, calcareous, and testaceous, in which, as in all calcareous districts, are several caverns ornamented with stalactites. I visited one near Safsaf, which has acquired great celebrity from the ignorance and superstition of the neighbouring inhabitants, who, in the stalactites, discover the images of petrified gods, men, and monsters,

every one giving to each fantastical form the name which suits his fancy. A Mahometan is in general, stupidly insensible to the productions of nature; but, if once his senses are excited by superstition, he becomes ridiculously observant of trifles, and finds something in every object to strengthen him in his religious belief. Never have I yet perceived any sentiment of admiration of the Supreme Creator of the Universe arise within his breast; a train of sensual ideas, suggested or nourished by the religion he professes, suffocates at its very birth every lofty sentiment, and turns into an evil channel, those feelings which in civilized man are frequently the first steps towards true religion. Often have I seized an opportunity of attentively watching the effect of many sublime displays of nature, upon several of these Mahometans, with the view of ascertaining the measure of their sensibility; and I have constantly found them wavering between stupidity and fanaticism, the real cause of moral and physical debasement.

Although the calcareous rock of the Cyrenaica is generally uniform in its composition throughout these mountains, there is

some change in its character upon their platforms, their fractures being irregular and earthy, and their colour white, like flour, but often inclining to yellow; and, though in that state, it is less hard than carbonated chalk, and can be detached by the nail, it is far from being friable between the fingers.

Notwithstanding the summits of these mountains are five or six hundred metres above the level of the Mediterranean, the rock is not less full of shells at the top than at the base; and these are principally bivalves, among which the *Carden* and the *Pecten* predominate. Sometimes it abounds with small shells of a lenticular shape, presenting in their fractures the character of Ammonites. In general, the shells which I observed scattered along the shore, or conglomerated in the crust of the testaceous sand, were of a different species from those I found upon these hills.

In some of my letters, I have attempted to shew, that the mountains of the Cyrenaica form no part of the eastern prolongation of that chain which rises upon the northern border of the African coast, and extends from the western shores of the

gulph of the great Syrtis as far as the kingdom of Morocco; and my observations upon the termination of the gulph demonstrate that there exists no such connexion. But this does not prevent the calcareous constitution of Mount Atlas from forming also the character of the Cyrenean mountains. I am unacquainted with the Atlantic chain of mountains to the west of Tripoli, but I have seen several specimens of the rocks between Tripoli and Tunis, and they display the same character and formation. Des Fontaines the botanist, who, in search of plants, wandered much among the mountains between Tunis and Algiers, says, that they are all calcareous and testaceous; and the mountains to the south of the Cyrenaica, which break off abruptly upon the borders of the desert of Barca, are, I think, described by Horneman as of the same nature. Between this tract of what is termed second formation, and the granite mountains bordering upon the Nile, whence the Egyptians and Romans drew the enormous masses which they employed in their public edifices, is situated the Ammonian region, almost overwhelmed with sand. It appears, therefore, that the calca-

reous testaceous system predominates along the southern shores of the Mediterranean, and in that mountainous chain which gradually rising to various heights in the territories of Algiers and Tunis, attains a considerable elevation in the Cyrenaica, and finally declines towards Egypt in the Catabatmos. It seems also, that the bases of the mountains upon this part of the Mediterranean coast are covered upon their northern borders with a marine alluvial soil, sometimes decomposed and sandy, and sometimes conglomerated in crusts of different degrees of thickness.

Should you chance to communicate my letters to any persons less attached than yourself to the study of natural history and ancient geography, they might, from these long details upon such subjects, imagine that I had totally forgotten the Bey and his troops, as well as the object of his expedition; but in truth, from his long stay among these mountains, the Bey may himself be supposed either to have forgotten or to have neglected it. It is difficult to say which of these two brothers is the most pusillanimous; sometimes the report of our advancing has induced the rebel to fall

back, but, if in spite of such report, he has maintained or returned to his position, we have never thought of molesting him, but have spread abroad in every direction the extent of our preparations for an attack; he then has retreated at his ease; we have made a great noise and bustle about pursuing him, and the camp has been broken up; but our advance has been so prudently managed, that we have always kept at some distance from his rear. Such has been our system of tactics during the expedition; and as it is likely to be continued, it will, I hope, save me from witnessing some horrid and bloody scene between the brothers; an escape, for which, however, I shall be more beholden to their fear than to any other cause. It was in this slow pursuit of an enemy that we arrived in the environs of Cyrene; but, though we have been here some time, and have every morning trumpeted forth our intention to advance, the rebel emboldened probably by our want of vigour, continues steadily at Derna, only one day's march from the camp of his bitterest enemy.

The Bey consoles himself for the ill success of his stratagem, by pillaging the Be-

douins who follow his army, or inhabit the neighbouring mountains and valleys; and instead of reflecting, that he is in the midst of people but lately in a state of revolt, and now exposed to daily extortion and oppression, he passes whole days stretched out in his tent, surrounded by his Mamelukes, and apparently free from all apprehension of his slumbers being disturbed. Having met me one day upon my return from one of my frequent excursions to Cyrene, which to a mind like his seemed quite incomprehensible, he accosted me with his customary air and tone of contempt, "You Christians," he said, "have "all the same passion for hunting after and "examining, all the old dilapidated build- "ings in my father's dominions; but, tell "me truly, have you discovered any trea- "sures in Grenna?" "Yes, Sir," I replied, "I have found there a most valua- "ble treasure—a spring of delicious water "issuing from the mountains, and suffi- "ciently copious to supply the wants not "only of your whole army, but of all the "Bedouins and their flocks which follow "you." This, as I had expected, greatly excited his curiosity; and, as my report

was confirmed by my guides and several of the Bedouins, the Bey resolved to accompany me the next day, and to visit the phenomenon.

Accordingly we set off early next morning, and I conducted the Bey and a multitude of his courtiers along the road from whence the immense ruins of the ancient Cyrene at once present themselves with the most striking effect; nor shall I ever forget the impression which this solemn scene produced upon even those unlettered barbarians. After remaining some time in silent astonishment, they looked expressively at each other, and signified their amazement "that *Christian* art should have produced things so great and marvellous." When they reached the fountain of Apollo, and saw such a volume of water rush, as it were, out of the rock and roll down the declivities among fragments of stones, they uttered loud shouts of joy, and gathered round it in crowds. The Bey, stretching himself out upon its brink, began by plunging in his hands, his feet, and his head; and his example was followed by his attendants with as much joy and noise as a flock of geese would have testified after a long pri-

vation of their favourite element. Orders were instantly dispatched for the whole army to remove their tents to Cyrene; the Bey's was pitched close to the fountain, and there was not a day that these waters, once sacred to Apollo, were not polluted by that barbarian and his slaves; the Bey continuing stretched out near the fountain during the greater part of the day, apparently occupied with nothing but the murmuring sound of the passing waters.

LETTER XIV.

FROM CYRENE TO DERNA.

Flight of the rebel—movements of the Bey's army—Gobba—a fine spring of water—ancient portico—arrival at Derna—its fertile territory—abundance of water—fruitless attempt of the United States of America to form an establishment there—unsafe harbour—sanguinary acts of the rebel—submission of the tribes to the Bey—twenty-two of their chiefs sent to Tripoli.

20th June.

It was now the twentieth of June, and still the Bey did not seem satiated with watching the flow of waters at Cyrene; but intelligence arriving this morning that his rebellious brother, alarmed at our present attitude, and thinking himself no longer in safety at Derna, had taken refuge in the gulph of Bomba, upon the frontiers of Egypt; the dormant martial feelings of the

Bey were roused, and he gave orders for the instant pursuit of the fugitive.

21st June.

Accordingly on the following morning we quitted our memorable position, and directed our march eastward to Gobba, situated among mountains, and about eight hours march from Cyrene. The whole of our route lay along the elevated plain which extends eastward from that city, and continually exhibits the remains of ancient edifices, and streets excavated in the solid rock and deeply indented with wheel-tracks. It may not be useless to observe, that neither now nor for a long time past, has the noise of any description of carriages been heard by the inhabitants of these regions, and that in their streets and roads, the tracks of camels, and the steps of a barefooted and wretched people have succeeded to the wheel-ruts.

Gobba is a welcome halting place to travellers from Cyrene to Derna, on account of a never-failing spring of excellent water which runs into a basin surrounded by a small portico, a work executed during the prosperous days of Cyrene, and pro-

tected, by its utility, from the violence of the barbarians. Near it are several excavated sepulchres, so well preserved as to have afforded several of us protection from the burning sun, during our few hours of repose.

The march from Gobba to Derna was as fatiguing and unpleasant as that from Cyrene had been agreeable; for we followed a narrow winding path flanked by rocks and precipices, and rendered intricate and tedious by numerous low cypress bushes, over which our horses incessantly stumbled and with difficulty made their way. A handful of well disciplined troops posted in ambush in these defiles, would easily have buried the Bey and his whole army among the bushes; but the enemy whom he pretended to pursue, was not less inexpert than himself, and we advanced as incautiously as he had retreated pusillanimously. Upon quitting these perilous defiles, we formed ourselves within sight of the sea and near Derna, to which we descended on the sloping face of a naked and slippery rock, with the loss of several of our horses.

The territory of Derna is a narrow plain of most fertile land, situated upon a small

bay, and bounded to the west by Cape Bon-Andrea, and to the east by a chain of rocks, which, after nearly encircling the plain, stretch precipitously into the sea. Within this inclosure flourish great numbers of palm trees, whose rough and singular tops extend and spread over the softer forms of european trees, over the finest vines, pomegranate, olive, fig, apricot, and other fruit trees, among which tower in superior beauty, and with forms truly Asiatic, the fig trees of Adam, (*Musa paradisiaca, Linn,*) the first I have yet seen upon these shores. In the centre of this plain, and surrounded by gardens full of orange and lemon trees, the exterior of Derna displays itself to great advantage; but though its streets are unusually regular, the houses, which are very low, small, and built of pebbles, cemented with clay, but full of chinks on every side, convey no other idea than that of perfect wretchedness. These habitations are so many authentic documents in proof of the extreme ignorance and inertness of the people; for the environs of the town abound with limestone, and the neighbouring hills are well provided with wood for burning it. The fortress destined for the Bey's resi-

dence is in the centre of the town; but though of considerable extent, it is not less wretched and dilapidated, than the dwellings of the inhabitants.

Two very abundant springs of excellent water issue from the rocks which slope towards Derna; one, collected in an aqueduct, supplies the town, and serves to irrigate the plain; and the other is conveyed to Bemensura, a village about a mile from Derna. Some idea of the value which in this district is set upon water, may be gathered from the appellation bestowed upon these sources; the one being called *Haen Derna,* or the apple of the eye of Derna, and the other *Haen Bemensura,* or the apple of the eye of Bemensura. Frequent irrigations, and the constant moisture which filters from the surrounding hills, contribute, with the heat concentrated by the rocky boundary, to maintain a degree of vegetation vigorous almost beyond credibility.

Derna contains all the elements of an easy subsistence for a considerable population; excellent meat and milk are brought there by the Arabs who feed their numerous flocks and herds upon the adjacent

hills; the plain is admirably calculated to produce every kind of grain; the most exquisite fruits abound there throughout the winter; and the inhabitants carry on a very lucrative trade with the vast quantities of honey made by the bees which swarm and multiply prodigiously upon the summits of the surrounding rocks. But all these sources of prosperity are poisoned by the unsettled state of the country, and the barbarous nature of the government. The people are never safe from the incursions of the Bedouins, who frequently enter the town in armed bands, and plunder the inhabitants; and if they contrive to save any thing from the hands of these marauders, they cannot escape from the rapacity of their governors. Fatalism, offspring of Mahometan ignorance and superstition, continually exposes the people to the ravages of the plague, which is often imported from Egypt; and protected by such fatal doctrine, that horrid disorder raged so fiercely at Derna a few years since, that the number of its inhabitants was speedily reduced from seven thousand to five hundred.

The United States of America were at one period desirous of forming an establishment

at Derna, which they offered to purchase of the Pacha of Tripoli; but their offer being rejected, and some misunderstanding having taken place upon other grounds, they forcibly seized it. Not long afterwards, however, from what motives I could not learn, they suddenly desisted from their enterprize and quitted the place, leaving behind them a battery with six pieces of cannon, and a water-mill which is still in use, and gives rise to much stupid wonder in such of our barbarians as happen to approach it.

The want of a good harbour is probably the reason why no foreign power, desirous of having a stable footing in that part of the Mediterranean, has established itself at Derna; for besides that this bay offers no convenient or secure asylum for shipping, the road itself is intersected by sharp and rocky calcareous strata which project far into it under the water, and from their cutting or tearing the cables that rub against them, are by mariners denominated saws. But towards the point of Cape Bon-Andrea, the sea forms a capacious bay where even large vessels may ride in safety during blowing weather. The situation of this

bay, between Apollonia and Derna, convinces me that it must have been the ancient Naustadmos, which according to both Strabo and Ptolemy, was the naval station of the Cyreneans, and which I regret I had no opportunity of examining.

The silence of the old geographers as to the site and other particulars of ancient Derna, (Διρνη) would probably subject it to doubt and conjecture if a bastion of very antique date, protecting the present town towards the sea, did not preserve the traces of the former; and this indisputable indication is supported by the correspondence of its site with the known and recorded distances from other places, and by its entire preservation of the name it bore among the ancients.

At Derna we had speaking proofs of the cruelties committed by the rebellious Bey previous to his retreat; for the ground in the fort was stained with the blood of those whom the monster, at the moment of marching, had sacrificed to his passion and suspicions. The first victims were his female slaves, who were slaughtered, because he did not choose that others should possess what had once belonged to him, and be-

cause he thought they would retard his flight. Such and many other sanguinary acts had alienated from him the very tribes that had most warmly embraced his party; and the few who accompanied him to the gulph of Bomba, abandoned him as soon as they heard of our entrance into Derna.

The chiefs of all the tribes, after having sent in their submission to our triumphant Bey, were so encouraged by his kind reception of their deputies, that they soon afterwards presented themselves before him, and endeavoured to excuse or justify their conduct. The Bey received them with apparent cordiality, and seemed satisfied with their explanation, but required that twenty-two individuals, selected from the most opulent families, should be sent to Tripoli, to renew, in the name of all the tribes, their oaths of allegiance to the Pacha; and the Bedouins readily acquiescing, the deputies were speedily selected and sent off to Tripoli, strongly escorted and little suspecting the treachery in contemplation.

LETTER XV.

FROM DERNA TO THE GULPH OF BOMBA, AND BACK TO BENGASI.

March from Derna—nature of the country—gulph of Bomba—ancient port of Ménelaus—frontiers of Egypt and Tripoli—hordes of robbers—return to Labiar—garden of the Hesperides.

Our arrival at Derna, and the perfect submission of all the tribes to the Bey Ahmet, left his rebellious brother in such a hopeless situation, that he hastened to quit his father's dominions and repair to Caïro, under the protection of the Pacha Mahmet Aly his relation. The report of his being abandoned by his troops, and of his resolution to quit the country, no sooner reached the Bey, than he decided that we should proceed to the gulf of Bomba. An experienced general, however intrepid he might be, would doubtless have paused and reflected before he commenced a march of eight days

through a country which had just been the theatre of a revolt; for our subsistence depended solely upon the good will of the inhabitants, and this good will could scarcely be relied upon in a country, where such of the people as now appeared submissive, were in fact more discontented than before, and where such as were not so before, were rendered inimical by our rapacity. The cowardice of our enemy had procured us a great reputation for valour; we passed for invincible because nobody had in truth beaten us; but the bold thought of attacking us had never entered any body's mind.

Our march was hurried, and uninteresting to detail; there were no Marabout churches to visit; there was no tribute to collect to induce us to halt; the nature and features of the country are in general similar to those in the Cyrenaica; and frequent vestiges of ancient habitations threw an additional gloom over these deserted and melancholy regions. We wound our way among wild and rugged mountains, frequently enlivened by groups of evergreens, among which the cypress, arbutus, Phenician juniper, gigantic myrtle, carob, and laurel, were most abundant; and as they

form no long and uniform woods, but are scattered about in a variety of forms and groupes among the rocks, they are very picturesque ornaments of the scenery. The ground is throughout broken and irregular, and does not slope down into pastures as in the Cyrenaica; but the privation of that agreeable feature has its compensation, for the want of grass lands secures this district from the incursions of the vagabond hordes in its neighbourhood. The woody and elevated nature of this country affords frequent and copious springs of clear and most delicious water, which may justly be considered by the traveller as a perfect blessing, so great is the thirst excited by moving about at this season under such a brilliant and scorching sun.

Upon the eighth day of our march we emerged from the hills, and found ourselves within sight of the Mediterranean sea and the gulph of Bomba, a vast bay bounded to the west by lofty precipitous mountains which form Cape Razat, and gently slope down towards the east into low hills, having at a distance the appearance of an extensive plain. Three vast and craggy rocks rise out of the waters beneath Cape Razat,

and stretch out like islands towards the east part of the gulph.

In this bay geographers recognize the harbour of Menelaus, mentioned by Herodotus, Strabo, Ptolemy, and other ancient writers. During our short stay here I was unable to discover any positive traces of the power of the Cyreneans, though their dominions certainly extended hither; but the Bedouins of the district unite in saying that within land, at some little distance from the bottom of the gulph, there is a lake with a small island in its centre, covered with noble remains of antiquity.

We were now upon the frontiers of Tripoli and Egypt, the respective boundaries of which are, however, perfectly unsettled; for under governments so decidedly despotic, power always concentrates itself near the person of the sovereign, and out of that sphere all is anarchy and confusion. Thus this tract of border-country is, as in former times, the resort of all the thieves, miscreants, and malcontents of both governments, so fertile in evil-doers. Pitching their tents in the neighbourhood of the gulph of Bomba, they make incursions into the adjacent districts, and pillage all who have the mis-

fortune to fall in their way. They are ever on the watch for the caravans and pilgrims who traverse this country on their way to Mecca; and this is the only route used by the people of Morocco, of all others the most fervently devoted to their prophet.

The equipage of a pilgrim would not indeed seem to hold out any temptation to rapacity; for wrapped up in a tattered black cloak, bareheaded and barefooted, carrying no other provisions than a skin full of barley-meal, they seem more calculated to excite compassion, than to hold out any object of plunder to a robber. But under this garb of poverty and penitence the pilgrim often conceals a quantity of gold dust, which being conveyed from the interior of Africa to Morocco, is dispatched by the caravans to Mecca, where it forms a great article of commerce. The hope of seizing this valuable prey, subjects every pilgrim to be stripped and narrowly examined by the marauders; and it is not many years since the uncle of the emperor of Morocco, though escorted by three thousand men, was attacked by this horde of robbers and pillaged, together with his escort. When there are no pilgrims to

plunder, these miscreants live by the sale of the cattle, which in their different incursions they have stolen from the neighbouring tribes.

We were constrained to quit this district empty-handed, for no tribute was to be expected from such a description of subjects; and, as they raised their tents upon our approach, and had encamped at the distance of several miles, their security was complete. "It is well for them," said our Bey, "that they have retreated within "the territory of Massar," (for so they call Cairo) "or I should certainly have extermi-"nated them." But, though they returned to their old quarters upon the very day that we broke up our encampment, we continued our march without seeming to be aware of their movements.

Our expedition might now be said to be happily terminated, since from Tripoli to the borders of Egypt every thing was, in appearance at least, reduced to submission. We, therefore, hastened our return to Labiar by the same road,[a] and then turning towards the north, descended to Bengasi, where the Bey was anxious to arrive be-

[a] Vide Letter ix.

fore the commencement of the Ramadan; because the rigid fast, scrupulously observed by every Mahometan during that period, would have disabled the troops from supporting the fatigues of a long march; and thus I have fortunately an opportunity of gratifying my desire of visiting the maritime part of the Cyrenaica.

The sea offered itself to our view as soon as we had passed the Labiar mountains, at the foot of which appeared a fine plain bounded to the north by the Mediterranean, and extending far on each side to the east and west. The Cyrenean mountains slope gently down towards this plain, but rising again in proportion as they extend eastward, they gradually encroach upon it, and finish by rising perpendicularly from the water's edge. The sides of these hills, refreshed by continual breezes from the north, and protected from the burning and dusty winds of the south, are covered with luxuriant verdure, and in the hands of intelligent agriculturists, would speedily become most valuably productive.

Having never seen any chesnut-trees upon the heights of the Cyrenaica, I conclude, that they would not find there the

quantity of moisture necessary for their fructification; but the declivities might assuredly be advantageously covered with olive-trees and vines; every kind of fruit-tree would succeed and flourish upon these maritime hills; and, it is painful to reflect, that the beautiful plain at the foot of the hills, and the whole line of coast so capable of bearing every species of grain, should be thus abandoned and uncultivated.

In the prosperous days of the Pentapolis, such a high reputation for fertility did this country enjoy, that in it was placed the site of the garden of the Hesperides. The picture of its situation, and of the ancient state of its vegetation, transmitted to us by an old writer,[a] still preserves its original colouring so perfectly, that I cannot refrain from a literal reproduction of it. "Cyrene being situated upon elevated and "precipitous ground as far as the Hesperides, has no port; and the bay formed "by the promontory *Phycus,* is inaccessible to vessels. Here is the garden of the "Hesperides, an inclosure so surrounded "by steep precipices that no person can "descend into it. It measures two stadia

[a] Scil. Peripl.

"every way, its width being equal to its "length. It is thickly planted with trees, "whose boughs are closely interwoven; "and it contains every kind of apple, "pomegranate, pear, arbutus, and mul-"berry-tree, with vines, myrtles, laurels, "ivy, olive, almond, and nut trees." In this passage we clearly see described the nature of the elevated part of the Cyrenaica, its precipitous rocks hanging over the sea, and the site of the garden of the Hesperides among those groupes of hills which I have just mentioned as rising upon the borders of the plain. It seems almost needless to remark, that nearly all the plants enumerated by the ancient author still thrive in these regions, and that many others equally useful might easily be introduced and cultivated there. Callimachus, who doubtless was well acquainted with the ancient state of the country he inhabited, says, that before Apollo led the colony of Tera to the fountain of Cyrene, this part of the Cyrenaica, by him called *Auzila*, was thickly covered with woods.

The existence, therefore, of this enchanting spot, or at least, that bottom of truth which served as a foundation for the fable,

was a positive geographical acknowledgment, which M. Gosselin[a] should not have refused the ancients, with no better ground for doing so, than somewhat of uncertainty, arising from a passage in Strabo relative to the site of the garden of the Hesperides. His interpretation of that passage leads him to infer, "that this pretended garden was "nothing more than a spot susceptible of "cultivation, and lying in the midst of "sands, like the great Oasis." But there is no Oasis upon this coast; and the authority of Strabo concerning the garden of the Hesperides is produced in vain; because the alleged passage is, in the united opinion of all the learned, so corrupted, that all the labour and erudition of Salmasius, Casaubon, and other eminent commentators, have never been able to restore it.

I am inclined to believe, that the description of this garden, in passing through the hands of the poets, received, at the expense of truth, many embellishments, which were, perhaps hastily and indiscreetly adopted as true, by writers who never visited this country. Personal inspection, accompanied by a comparison with the

[a] Recherches sur la Géographie des Anciens, p. 140.

descriptions of the ancient geographers who had seen this part of the Cyrenaica, can alone serve to separate reality from fiction; and, if inspection be not sufficient to ascertain with precision the spot where this celebrated garden existed, it will at least, establish the fact, that the fable was founded upon geography, and that the actual peculiarities of the soil and country correspond with the descriptions given of them by the ancients.

As we advanced among the hills, we found very frequent and venerable traces of the ancient inhabitants, especially a great number of wells so deeply excavated in the rock, that it required a rope of above a hundred feet in length to reach the water they contained. Around the wells are the remains of cisterns; and the ruins of aqueducts, which conveyed this excellent water in various directions to the adjacent fields, are often distinctly to be seen. Sometimes also, I observed vestiges of an ancient road, which probably led to the different towns upon the coast, which I shall have occasion to mention when I have made you acquainted with Bengasi.

LETTER XVI.

FROM BENGASI.

Situation of the town—its bay—construction —government—recent expulsion of the inhabitants by the Bedouins—Flies, a great plague—Jews—productions of the country —articles of trade—former lucrative commerce of the Genoese upon this coast.

THE town of Bengasi is situated upon the edge of a plain, close upon a bay of the sea, open to the north, and affording an asylum only to small vessels ; for, the rocks, which run across the entrance of the bay, render it inaccessible to large ships, and so dangerous to mariners, that in rough weather large vessels avoid this part of the coast, and steer for the bay of Tajuni, about five miles to the west of Bengasi. Behind the town is a pool of water frequented by swarms of wild fowl, and communicating with the sea by a narrow canal for the passage of fishing boats only. If Bengasi should be proved to occupy nearly

the site of the ancient Berenice, as several ruins within and without side of its walls seem to indicate; this pool must be the Marsh Tritonis of Strabo. But the little island in its centre has disappeared, together with the temple of Venus, which was constructed upon it; nor are there any traces of the river Lethe, whose mouth is said to have been upon these shores. Time may have destroyed both the temple and the island or rock upon which it stood; but, as for the river, I can safely attest, that there is no trace of the bed or channel of any stream whatever along the whole coast between Bengasi and Cape Ras-sem. The appellation of river, as used by the ancients, should however be received with caution in this country; for I have seen it employed to express every rill which in the rainy season flows from the hills, loses itself in the sands upon the shore, and leaves traces of its existence so faint as to be scarcely perceptible in summer.

In the plain immediately adjoining Bengasi I observed a few palm trees, and some tracts of land sown with barley; but all the rest is desolate and uncultivated, and

the beach is covered with sand hills accumulated by the winds and the sea. Throughout the town lie scattered the remains of ancient buildings and large blocks of wrought stone, which the inhabitants break in pieces, and employ in the construction of their wretched dwellings, cementing them with clay. The roof is a coat of seaweed, worked up also with mud and clay, and repaired annually at the approach of the rainy season; but, it frequently happens, that before the rains cease, the roof is washed away, and the walls fall to pieces. The Bey's castle in no wise differs from the rest in point of architecture; it is, indeed, provided with nine pieces of cannon pointed against the town, but the effect of every discharge is to bring down a part of the walls upon which they are placed.

Bengasi contains above five thousand inhabitants, of whom one half at least are Jews. It is the capital of a province, and the residence of a Bey, who not only unites in himself all the power, both civil, military, and judiciary, but frequently executes in person the sentences he has pronounced. It is true, indeed, that the functions of

such a governor consist principally in vexatious fiscal exactions, some permanent and fixed, others personal and occasional; and in these last his genius is most fertile and inventive. When his views are accomplished, and the tribute has been collected, all connexion between the sovereign and the subject seems to cease. It is not long since a tribe of Bedouins from the adjacent hills attacked Bengasi; drove away the inhabitants, and established themselves in their houses, where they still continue, the Pacha of Tripoli giving himself no concern about the matter. The old dwellers having paid their annual tribute before they were thus expelled, and the intruders hastening to do the same; the Pacha took no other notice of the transaction than loudly praising his good town of Bengasi, which had paid him two tributes in a year.

Of the many inconveniences to which they who set foot upon these shores are exposed, not one can compare with those occasioned by the flies at Bengasi. Not only the apartments in the houses, but the streets, the lanes, the open places, and even the immediate environs of the town, swarm

with those loathsome and buzzing insects, which throw themselves in myriads upon every one that passes, and cannot be driven away without a continual contest; nor is it possible to hold any long discourse without swallowing dozens of them. Not a line can be written without their gathering thick round the pen, which they sedulously follow in all its movements, so that nothing can be seen of what is written; and yet care must be taken not to disturb them, lest they make an attack upon the face, and creep up the nostrils of the writer, to the incredible torment of the sufferer. A dish is no sooner put upon the table than it is covered with these insects, as disgusting and as troublesome as the harpies of the poets; if an attempt be made to drive them away, they return in tenfold force, and with increased voracity; and hence has arisen here the custom of not eating till the night is somewhat advanced. It is said, that the great number of cattle, and the vast quantity of milk produced and made into butter and cheese upon the adjacent hills, are the causes of these swarms of flies; but, without disputing the reason assigned, I think that there must be some

other powerfully-acting cause within the town itself; because, having remained some time in what may be deemed the centre of the cattle and dairy country, I was never so cruelly tormented by flies there, as in the town.

The Jews form the labouring portion of the population of Bengasi, the remainder living in idleness at the expense of those unbelievers; in return for which, there is no species of vexation and extortion to which the Israelites are not exposed. They are not permitted to have a dwelling to themselves, but are forced to pay largely for being tolerated in the house of a Mahometan, who thinks he has a right to practise every kind of knavery upon his inmate. The clothes which a poor Jew had pulled off on going to bed, I saw exposed to sale in the market next morning by the master of the house. But such is the advantageous geographical position of Bengasi, that the love of gain, so rooted in the Hebrew people, will always attract a multitude of those, whose thirst for money inclines them to submit to every species of suffering and humiliation.

This is the market to which the nume-

rous tribes of Arabs who feed their flocks and herds upon the Cyrenean mountains conduct great droves of cattle, and bring vast quantities of wool, butter, ostrich feathers, and honey, and at which they purchase fire-arms and gunpowder, Tripoli cloaks, a few ordinary house-utensils, and some coarse earthen-ware. A great trade in cattle is carried on here with Malta, not only for the supply of that island, but of the vessels which are fitted out there for long voyages. The wool is sent to Tripoli, and there partly wrought into cloaks and coarse carpets, and partly sent to foreign markets. The ostrich feathers would alone form a most lucrative branch of trade, if the Europeans could purchase them directly of the Bedouins who bring them here; but the Jews pay a large annual tribute to the Pacha for the monopoly of that article. The Bedouins bring the skin of the ostrich with all its feathers on, sell the skin of the male for about thirty Spanish dollars, and that of the female for fifteen, and the Jews dispose of them at Leghorn or Marseilles for about triple their original cost.

From this picture of a commerce, chiefly

of exportation, you may judge to what height of prosperity this town might attain, were its surrounding territory cultivated with industry and skill, and were the government to prohibit monopolies, and encourage a fair and open traffic. The great trade almost exclusively carried on here by the Genoese in the early times of that republic, was one of the richest sources of its prosperity; and we find, that though their mercantile and political connexions with this country were subsequent to those with Armenia, Syria, and other places, both in Asia Minor and in Egypt, they in a short time made such a rapid progress, that as early as the year 1267, the government thought it expedient to institute at Genoa a school for the study of the Saracenic language.

There exists in the public archives at Genoa, an autograph treaty entered into in 1236, between the republic of Genoa, and one Busacherino, calling himself Lord of Africa, by which the Genoese were permitted freely to traffic from Tripoli to the confines of the kingdom of Barca. It appears also, that besides corn, they purchased

large quantities of wool, ostrich feathers, oil for their soap manufactories, different sorts of skins, leather, wax, and the various fruits of Barbary. In this enumeration we find the several productions of the Cyrenaica at this day. One important consequence of this traffic was, that the woollen manufactories at Genoa supplied many of the maritime cities of Europe with cloth. The mercantile speculations of the Genoese were indeed at that time supported and protected by the great naval power of the state; allies of Saladin, sultan of Egypt, and of the eastern emperors, and masters of Corsica and Cyprus, the Genoese, after the expulsion of the Saracens from the Mediterranean islands, and many of the cities in Spain, enforced the observance of treaties by a great display of naval power, and once within the very walls of Tripoli inflicted ample punishment for the violation of good faith.

The irresistible influence of time, and the destiny of nations, gradually produced the decay and termination of this power in the Genoese; but their skill and courage in all maritime enterprizes are not diminished,

and I may be allowed to hope, that encouraged by the display of the flag of our new sovereign, they will again visit these coasts, and resume the path which was trodden by their ancestors with such profit and glory.

LETTER XVII.

FROM BENGASI.

Collection of fine gems—excursion along the coast—ancient and ruined town of Adrianopolis—abundance of game—ancient Teuchira—error of Bruce—ancient Ptolometa.

SEVERAL precious monuments of antiquity are scattered round this town, and along the coast; and besides many ancient coins, and a great variety of ornaments in gold and silver, there are frequently found precious stones and gems so exquisitely engraved, as to confirm what an old author[a] has asserted concerning the passion of the Cyreneans for intaglios, and the great sums they expended in procuring and employing the most celebrated artists in that branch. Rossoni, the British vice-consul at Bengasi, has made a very fine and valuable collection of gems; and though some were brought to him by Bedouins from different

[a] Æliani, v. 11. l. c. 30.



parts of the Cyrenaica, by far the greater number was found within or very near the town of Bengasi. How much did I wish for the delight of hearing the celebrated Visconti, dissert upon these valuable testimonies of ancient taste, penetrate into ages long since past, and unveil the customs and religious rites of the different nations that successively dwelt upon these shores, as clearly and satisfactorily, as if he had himself lived among them, and professed the same worship.

A Hercules, of Greek workmanship, cut in a blood-coloured jasper, with his club in his right hand, and the lion's skin over his left arm, almost rivetted my attention, so superlatively beautiful is the execution. A Chiron teaching Achilles to draw the bow, scarcely yields to it: and a Vulcan at work upon a shield, cut in agate, also an eagle bearing away Ganymede, in garnet, are both in the most exquisite taste. In a cornelian, is engraved the head of a man of most animated countenance, crowned with laurel, and holding a pair of compasses in his hand; in this figure it is easy to distinguish a geometrician, and I am persuaded, that in this gem, Cyrene intended

to hand down to posterity the portrait of Eratosthenes, the most illustrious of its citizens, who first dared to calculate the circumference of the earth,[a] and executed his undertaking with such exactitude, that modern astronomers have in his calculations found more to admire than to correct.

I omit describing many other gems, destined probably to preserve the memory and actions of illustrious men; but, being unaccompanied by any distinguishing token, they excite admiration only upon account of the beauty of the work. It is to be remarked, that the European physiognomy prevails throughout the whole collection of heads. My attention was particularly directed by the proprietor of the collection to an emerald, sixteen millimetres long, and twelve broad, convex on both faces, and bearing on one side a Greek inscription; and on the other, a winged dragon terminating in a serpent, and from whose head issue six biforked rays, with a letter engraved at the point of each. In this dragon the proprietor of this curious gem, pleases himself with the idea of discovering the guardian of the garden of the Hesperides,

[a] Plin. lib. iii. c. 108.

in the presumed site of which the gem was found. It would, I think, be more advisable to study the meaning of the inscription than to decide upon that of the dragon; it is written indeed with many archaisms; but it is perfectly entire, the characters are very neatly cut, and the whole is calculated to excite the attention and investigation of the antiquary.



Some of the gems in this valuable collection seem to represent the arms or ensigns of different cities; and we know that in ancient works there is often much similarity between the coins and the intaglios. Two boys dancing under palm and olive trees are certainly allusive to the Cyrenaica; a trident between two dolphins might belong to the maritime station of Naustadmos; and that of Apollonia appears plainly indicated upon an agate, with a swan holding to its mouth a bent instrument like a trumpet, and having opposite to it a star and

the letters AΠ cut upon the margin. Apollonia still continues to bear the name of the god who in the shape of a swan carried off and bore away to the Lybian shore, Cyrene the daughter of Ipseus.

I am unable to ascertain to which of these maritime towns of Greek origin belongs an emerald bearing, in intaglio, under an olive branch, an Ibis, an insect like a bee or fly, and below them a head with a top-knot. Be not surprised if I place the Egyptian Ibis in cities of Greek origin; I have already expressed my belief that the Greeks who landed and settled here, borrowed much from their Egyptian neighbours; and the more I study their monuments of antiquity, the more am I confirmed in my opinion. You may be convinced of it by examining the hundred and fifty wax impressions, which M. Rossoni permitted me to take from these gems, and which will accompany this letter; and I especially call your attention to a small sardonyx, having the head of the ram Ammon upon a column. Greece never erected an altar to that divinity of pure, pastoral, and Lybian origin; but the Greeks of the Cyrenaica did not disdain to bend before the god of

the shepherds who wandered among the adjacent mountains, and they only took care to dress the divinity in the Greek fashion. Among the numerous occupations of Mercury during his romantic life, that of a shepherd was one; Grecian vanity gratified itself by affecting to discover in the Lybiam ram the worship of Mercury; and my conjecture on this subject is proved to be founded, by the Caduceus engraved at the foot of the column which supports the head of the Ammonian ram.

Virgil engrafted the rustic mythology of Latium upon that of the Greeks; and though poetry thus acquired an inexhaustible fund of beauty, the traces of the primitive times in Italy were strangely disturbed and confounded by it. The more attentively an experienced eye examines these gems, the more frequently will the habiliments of the Greek mythology be found upon an Egyptian ground. Many will be remarked to belong to a period too remote for any connexion with Greece, as is proved by the divinities, and other symbols engraved upon them, as well as by that rude workmanship which betrays the infancy of an art.

While the army lay at Bengasi, I made several excursions along the coast between that town and Cape Ras-sem. The road runs about a mile from the sea, leaving in the intermediate space a great number of sand hills, sometimes so lofty as to impede the view of the water. After four hours journey, the traveller reaches a spot called Zeiana, and has then a journey of two hours more across a country covered with ruins, to the remains of Adriana, a city which recals to mind the celebrated emperor Adrian, but of which scarcely one stone rests upon another. Ptolemy, who wrote after that prince, and, as it appears, under Marcus Aurelius, makes no mention of this town; but in the itinerary of Antoninus, and in the tables of Peutinger, it is expressly spoken of under the name of Adrianopolis, and as situated between Berenice and Teuchira. Antiquarians in general are full of doubts concerning the Lybian monuments of Adrian; but we know from Ælian that when that emperor was at Alexandria in Egypt, he came into Lybia to enjoy the pleasures of the chase; and this part of the Cyrenaica was probably quite as full of game then as it is now. The ga-

zelle run in droves up and down the hills, and such swarms of birds, especially pigeons and Barbary partridges, rise from the fields with so much noise and flutter, that the very ground, the trees, and the air seem almost to be in motion.

A little beyond the ancient Adrianopolis is Berzes, whose site is pointed out by a half-ruined tower upon an eminence near the sea, and by frequent vestiges of old buildings. Berzes was once inhabited by the Moors; but the predatory visits of the Bedouins forcing them to decamp, it is now abandoned, and never resorted to, except occasionally by some shepherds and their flocks, for the sake of its delicious water.

Pursuing the same direction, after three hours march are seen upon a rising ground near the sea, the ruins of that most ancient town Teuchira; a name which under the Ptolemies was changed into that of Arsinoe, but which it afterwards abandoned for that of Tochira, its present appellation. Between the hill upon which it stood, and the skirts of the Cyrenean mountains, is an extensive plain perfectly capable of cultivation. The town was surrounded by a square wall about two miles in circumference, with

a round tower at each angle. This wall, which at a distance has the appearance of a vast fort, is fallen into decay upon the side next the sea, but the other three sides are nearly entire, and have a very striking effect when the stranger first beholds them. The hill upon which stood the town, and particularly that part near the walls, was excavated for sepulchres, of which, many thousands may still be numbered. The interior of the town is one confused heap of ruins ; but in its centre rises from amongst them a square monument built of vast blocks of stone, upon each of which is cut an inscription within a garland of laurel. I distinguished also the ruins of a temple, around which are scattered the remains of capitals ornamented with vine leaves and grapes, indicative of its having been dedicated to Bacchus. The interior part of the town wall is so covered with Greek inscriptions, that the whole annals of the place may be supposed to have been registered there; but they have suffered greatly from the nature of the materials, which is calcareous sandstone, much more liable to decay than that of Cyrene.

The style of building at Tochira, resem-

bling that at Cyrene, and the similarity in the abundance and construction of the tombs at both those places, confirm the report of Herodotus, who says, that Teuchira followed the laws and usages of the Cyreneans. He adds that it was situated upon the sea-coast near Barca; and in fact Barca lies among the mountains, a few miles from Tochira. Strabo and Ptolemy agree in placing it between Berenice and Ptolometa; and the ruins which still preserve the uncorrupted appellation of Tochira are situated precisely between those places; so that every thing unites in settling this point of ancient geography beyond the shadow of a doubt. What therefore are we to think of Bruce's assertion, that he had visited the ruins of Arsinoe, and not found there any thing which could gratify curiosity? You must not, however, form a judgment injurious to the good faith of that traveller, but must follow him from Arsinoe on his progress to Cape Ras-sem, and remark that he mentions having visited Ptolometa, a city, in his opinion, founded by Ptolemy Philadelphus, in which he found the walls and gates of the town still entire and covered with inscriptions; and among

other remains of antiquity he particularly specifies some columns of a portico, and the ruins of a temple of the Ionic order.

If the well preserved walls, their inscriptions, and the ruins of the temple at Teuchira should not be sufficient to excite a suspicion that Bruce believed himself to be at Ptolometa, when in fact he was at Tochira, it would be confirmed by my testimony, that not only Ptolometa is not now surrounded by walls, but that I could discover no traces of its ever having been so. Thus far indeed no other mischief would arise from this blunder, than that of one town being taken for another; an error however of no small consequence when treating of cities of a different origin and character; but much confusion arises from his having bestowed upon Tochira the remains of a portico, which remains, in truth exist not there, but at Ptolometa; thus confounding localities in such a manner, that what is really true, is exactly that which is most detrimental to the veracity of his description.

The remains of ancient edifices are scattered about on every side between Tochira and Ptolometa, a distance of six hours

march; but the ever varying, and often pleasing aspect of the hills which rise before the traveller as he proceeds towards Cape Ras-sem, amuses the mind, and withdraws it from the melancholy contemplation of the ravages of time. The city of the Ptolemies is signalized at two hours distance by a vast square tower, rising from the verge of the plain towards the east. The ruins of the town indicate that it was seated partly in the plain, and partly upon the declivity of a hill which projects from the Cyrenean mountains into the sea; they are scattered over an extent of about four miles in circumference, and are characterized by something more majestic than any I have yet seen. The tower which, as I have said, announced from far the city of the Ptolemies, stands at its west end, and is commonly reputed to be the mausoleum of its sovereigns. It is indeed a magnificent monument, supported by a vast square base, cut in the side of the hill, and bearing upon it a tower composed of enormous square blocks of stone. The entrance is of a triangular shape; and within side are several rows of cells for the reception of the dead.

The sepulchres of the citizens of Ptolo-

meta, constructed in the very same manner as those at Cyrene, are dispersed about among the other ruins in such numbers as probably to exceed four thousand. In the centre of the town there still stand, upon a mosaic pavement, several columns of enormous dimensions, formed of cylindrical stones placed one upon the other; and under the pavement is a vault divided by thick walls into nine long passages which receive light from above.

You will have observed from my descriptions, that in the Cyrenean structures the Greek style is generally engrafted upon an Egyptian stock; but the remains of Ptolometa appear to be wholly of Egyptian origin, and to be all modelled upon that style, which though rough and rude, has in it somewhat of grandeur that excites respect. It is impossible with any certainty to say to which of the Ptolemies the foundation of this city ought to be ascribed. Cyrene lost its liberty very soon after the death of Alexander, and under the first Ptolemy; and from that epoch the effigy of each of the sovereigns of that race appears upon the Cyrenean coins, with some emblem of the conquered province. It was

then that the Ptolemies, having become masters of the temple of Jupiter Ammon, adopted upon their coins and medals the horns of the Egyptian ram, and placed them upon their effigies; and then also the *Silphium* and the Cyrenean wheel, gave way to the eagle holding the thunder-bolt between its feet. Upon some of the coins which I shall send you, will be found the physiognomy of the first Ptolemy, with his ample and bony forehead, prominent chin, and tokens of declining age. On the reverse is the head of Berenice, with her locks hanging down in ringlets upon her shoulders—*pendentibus retro cincinnis.*



As there was a long series of Ptolemies, and as the names of Berenice and Arsinoe appear so often among the queens of Egypt, I cannot pretend to ascertain which of them caused the ancient name of Hesperides, to be changed into Berenice, and that of Teuchira into Arsinoe. Some of these coins

were found among the ruins of Ptolometa; but if the silence of the ancients leaves room for conjecture, I should think that Ptolometa was founded by the seventh Ptolemy, commonly called Phisco; for in his disputes with his brother, Ptolemy Philometor, the latter having had recourse to the Romans, the senate decreed that he should govern Egypt and Cyprus, and that his brother should rule over Lybia with Cyrene. The Cyrenaica becoming therefore the seat of his government, it is probable that the place of his residence, augmented and adorned by him with so many edifices, would relinquish its ancient name of Barca, and assume that of Ptolemais. The mausoleum erected there, bearing every mark of regal grandeur, may with probability be attributed to him; since it was useless for the Ptolemies who preceded him to have had tombs here, when their usual residence was in Egypt; nor is it likely to have been erected after his time, because, jealous as were the Egyptians of their burial places, the first Egyptian king of the Cyrenaica would never have chosen to have had his mausoleum in his capital, undistinguished from the magnificent sepulchres of his subjects.

We are assured by Strabo,[a] Pliny,[b] and other old geographers, that Ptolometa was built upon the very spot where the ancient Barca had stood; but Ptolemy differs from them, and fixes the site of Ptolemais upon the sea, and that of Barca within land. Herodotus speaks frequently and at length of Barca, of its foundation by the sons of Battus, of its contests with Cyrene, and of its melancholy fate under the Persians; but he no where describes its situation either as near the sea, or within land. The Periplus, which places that town within land, and about a hundred stadia from its port, enables us to conciliate the discordant opinions of the geographers, and authorizes me to say that I discovered the ruins of Barca, at a place now called Merge, among the hills about two hours walk from Ptolometa, along a very steep path towards the south-east. These ruins consist of tombs, walls fallen down, and scattered over a level space, and wells of very great depth, some of which still afford most excellent water. The site is rural, and though wilder, bears some resemblance to the general aspect of the Cyrenean hills. Ptolometa is the last

[a] Lib. i. [b] Lib. v. c. 5.

or most eastern of the towns which were built by the ancients at the foot of the mountains of Cyrene; beyond it the flat shore ceases, and a precipitous, inaccessible crag advancing into the sea forms the Cape Ras-sem.

LETTER XVIII.

FROM BENGASI.

Celebration of the Ramadan—the Bey's perfidious conduct towards the tribes—massacre of a great number of them—termination of the expedition.

Whilst I was occupied in wandering over the maritime hills of the Cyrenaica in search of natural productions and antique monuments, all was quiet at Bengasi, and the celebration of the Ramadan gave that city a novel appearance, inverting the customary order of things. The fast was so strictly observed by the Mahometans, that they remained from morning until night without taking any kind of refreshment; but the moment night took place, they abandoned themselves to every species of intemperance, spent the whole of it in riot and debauchery, and at length, fatigued by the indulgence of every kind of gluttony and excess, passed the following day in

sleep, and awoke only to renew their orgies. I can now comprehend why these days of penitence are as anxiously wished for by the Mahometans as the joyous ones of the Carnival by the Catholics. Nothing can be more annoying than for a European to find himself amidst these Mahometan rites; for every one is sleeping during the day, and must not be disturbed; and woe to him who should attempt to interfere with their nocturnal revelries.

During this season of apparent peace and amity, a most perfidious plot was preparing, and the catastrophe of this expedition, hitherto unstained by blood, was approaching. The tribe of Zoasi had not yet expiated the sin of having taken part with the rebel; it had, indeed, deserted him before our arrival in that part of the country; it had readily sent twenty-two hostages to Tripoli, in testimony of its future good faith and obedience; and finally, it had received the Bey and his troops with chearfulness and hospitality. But nothing could persuade the Pacha that this conduct was occasioned by any other motive than fear; and it appears, from subsequent events, that his instructions to his

son were to dissimulate, and seem to forget the past, but to take ample vengeance at a favourable moment. The Bey and his courtiers entered so fully into their sovereign's intentions, that the Zoasi were treated as the most favourite subjects; nothing was talked of but their loyalty in joining the Bey's standard, and assisting him in pursuing the rebel; and not a day passed without the Bey sending for one or other of their chiefs, and dismissing him loaded with caresses. Under these exterior tokens of kindness, lurked and ripened the design of assassinating first the chiefs, and then the whole of the tribe, if it were possible; but to ensure success, it was necessary to cut off the chiefs suddenly and at one blow, and surprize the tribe before it could be aware of its danger.

In the meanwhile, it was industriously rumoured, that the Bey had sought and obtained his father's permission solemnly to bestow the red mantle upon the chiefs of the Zoasi tribe, as a reward for the signal attachment they had shewn him. At the same time, a Sciaus, one of the Zoasi tribe, who had long been in the Pacha's immediate service, and had on many occasions

been extremely useful to many of his countrymen, and consequently enjoyed great consideration amongst them, was dispatched from Tripoli to Bengasi with secret instructions. When he reached Bengasi he held long conferences with the Bey and his confidential counsellor, the governor of Mesurata, a complete adept in perfidy; and after many dark intrigues, the Sciaus was sent to all those of his tribe scattered over the Cyrenaica, with an invitation from the Bey to be present at Bengasi at the solemn distribution of the red mantle to their chiefs. He added, with a seeming air of confidence, that the Pacha had at first rejected his son's request, but that he had himself so warmly supported it, that the Pacha had at length yielded to his solicitations, and had even appointed him to be the messenger of such happy tidings.

It has since been reported, that some of the Bedouins ventured to express to the whole tribe their suspicions of treachery; but the dice were now thrown, and it was become necessary either to break out into open rebellion, or to place implicit confidence in the Bey. His unremitting caresses, and the splendour of the red cloak,

had likewise so dazzled the minds of the Bedouin chieftains, that it was decided to accept the invitation, and appear at Bengasi upon the day appointed; a determination which produced the most lively satisfaction at that place, its inhabitants being deeply and sincerely interested in a pacification, which would close the campaign with a public and magnificent festival, and ensure their future prosperity.

Accordingly, the whole tribe of Zoasi appeared within sight of Bengasi on the evening of the appointed day, and covered the adjacent plain with its flocks and herds. The sight of a town so lately the theatre of its rebellion, and now containing within its walls the army which had occasioned the submission of the malcontents, renewed the apprehensions of many; and they who had originally been averse to the appearance of the tribe at Bengasi, took advantage of the rising alarm amongst the multitude, to feed their suspicions, to remind them of their past injuries, and to recal to their recollection a thousand other treacherous occurrences planned and executed with the same artifices. This discourse and representations had such an effect upon the tribe, already

under the influence of consternation, that it was decided, that the chiefs alone should enter the town to receive the promised honours, and that the rest of the tribe should remain steady in the tents.

5th September.

Upon the following day, the 5th of September, the hapless chiefs, amounting to forty-five, made their grand entry into Bengasi, and proceeding towards the fort were met by the Bey, who with much appearance of satisfaction and cordiality, and many flattering speeches and caresses, conducted them into the fortress, where coffee was immediately offered to them. Whilst he was partaking of it with them, and they, emboldened by his friendly attentions, were enjoying the delight of such a sincere reconciliation, the Bey's guards, with drawn sabres, suddenly rushed into the apartment, and executed the sanguinary orders they had previously received. Such of the victims as offered any resistance, were instantly dispatched; others were dragged into an adjoining chamber and successively put to death; a few, who in the confusion attempted to escape by flight, were fired at

and killed; and some who gained the top of the citadel, and precipitated themselves from its walls, were found disabled by the sentinels stationed round the fort, and immediately murdered.

To this bloody scene succeeded a movement among the troops which spread consternation through the whole town of Bengasi; for as soon as the chiefs were slaughtered, the governor of Mesurata ordered the troops to assemble without delay, and march to surprise the Bedouins in their tents. The cavalry turbulently and furiously galloping through the streets; the noise and bawling of the slaves and soldiers who wandered about uncertain whither to repair; and the well founded terrors of the inhabitants, the usual victims of such tumultuary proceedings—formed altogether a scene of horror and dismay, far beyond every power of description.

During these terrifying transactions I hastened to the fort as the only place of security, and I still shudder at the recollection of the appalling spectacle which it offered to my sight; for the unfortunate victims of African treachery lay stretched upon the ground, struggling and expiring

in the blood which was flowing from their wounds, while the Bey on horseback, armed with a musket, in the midst of his Mamelukes and of the dead, was swearing and raving like a madman, because the troops were not yet upon the march against the Bedouins. By this delay, many of the unfortunate Zoasi, who had gained intelligence of the proceedings in the town, escaped from the very jaws of death, and leaving every thing behind them, speedily fled and concealed themselves among the neighbouring mountains. In the meanwhile, the Bey himself heading his cavalry, and advancing at full speed, invested the Bedouin encampment, when all the children and men who had remained there were massacred without mercy or distinction; the women being first trodden under foot by the horses, and then given up to the ferocious brutality of the soldiery. The booty thus atrociously acquired by the Bey consisted in four thousand camels, ten thousand sheep, six thousand oxen, many slaves, and a considerable quantity of money; and the baggage of the tribe became the prey of the troops.

A few days after the Zoasi had thus

fallen victims to the Bey's treachery, and their own credulity; the twenty-two hostages whom the Pacha had sent back by sea, in the belief, that they were to be released upon the day their countrymen should receive the honour of being invested with the red mantle, were massacred by the Bey's soldiers on board the vessel which had brought them; and their bodies were then thrown into the sea. Amongst them were two boys, one of whom was seven years of age, the other only five; but their tender years and innocent lives found no compassion in the sight of these blood-thirsty barbarians; and the bodies of the children, being cast upon the shore near the town, were left there, and devoured by dogs, no person daring to remove or inter them. A few of the Zoasi, whose curiosity had attracted them to the town while their chiefs were proceeding to wait upon the Bey, and who, in the first tumult, had escaped the notice of their enemies, but had no hope of being able to rejoin their tribe, now fled for safety to the sepulchre of a Marabout, called, from the place of his interment, Oecia. The Bey not daring to violate so holy an asylum, order-

ed that no succour should be afforded them from without; and in the persuasion, that either hunger or the sword would eventually destroy them, he surrounded the sepulchre with troops. The whole town was sincerely but silently interested in the fate of these persecuted people; upon the third day a copious spring of water issued from the tomb of the Marabout; the ground close to it was found sprinkled with dates and other articles of food, the hungry were fed, the whole population of Bengasi and the adjacent villages flocked to admire and reverence such a portentous event, and the Marabout's reputation rose, in proportion as that of the Bey sunk into hatred and horror.

In a few days we are to march for Tripoli; I full of real affliction at the bloody scenes which I have just witnessed; the Bey and his followers, though vexed at not having completely exterminated their enemies, consoling themselves with the plunder they have collected during the expedition.

APPENDIX.

Captain Leautier's instructions for navigating the coast of the gulph of the great Syrtis, from Cape Mesurata to 30° 27′ 10″ *north latitude.*

In coming from the westward, Cape Mesurata at the distance of three leagues assumes the figure of three hills resembling islands; and, on nearing it, some palm trees are seen between one hill and another, and a small Marabout church upon the most western point. From this Cape, in order to make the station of Mesurata, you must steer south-east for a league and a half, when a white hill of a conical form opens upon you, having to the east of it a plain covered with palm trees. A quarter of a league to the east of those trees rises some ground, of a reddish coloured earth, surmounted by a Marabout; and by keeping that ground to the south-west you anchor, within a quar-

ter of a league, in six fathom water upon a muddy bottom, latitude 32° 26′ 15″.

In coasting the gulph from this anchorage-ground, you must steer between south and a quarter, and south-east; and in two leagues and a half you will see a single palm tree, resembling a ship, from which you must rather bear away, leaving the land at the distance of a quarter of a league, and navigating in six fathom water upon a black and white bottom.

When you have got the palm tree to the westward of you, you will have a ledge of rocks diametrically opposite to it; in other words, the palm tree will be to the westward of you, and the ledge of rocks to the westward, two leagues from the land. This ledge is one league in length, from east to west, is from fourteen to seventeen feet deep, and if the sea is in any degree heavy, should be avoided even by the smallest vessels. Should you wish to anchor hereabouts, you must continue coasting till the palm tree is to the north-west, when you may anchor in seven or eight fathom water with a fine sandy bottom. This anchorage-ground, called Arar, is secure from all the winds between south and north east.

In going from Arar to Isa, seventeen leagues from the first anchorage-ground within the gulph, you continue coasting as before; the whole coast is low, white, and flat; the bottom is of sand under six or eight fathom water. After navigating thirteen leagues, you have, at a distance from the sea, a black-looking hill with an old fort upon it; the bottom here is composed of weeds and mud under, from four to six fathom, water. When the old fort bears between south-west and west, at two thirds of a league from land, you will have reached Isa, where you may anchor in three or four fathom water, and in 31° 23′ 10″ north latitude; but you will there be exposed to every wind that blows, owing to the flats which are from three to four leagues wide.

From Isa, to latitude 30° 50′ north, the coast runs south and east; the bottom is partly fine sand, and partly mud, the continent low, and the soil blackish. In the whole run from Cape Mesurata to 30° 50′ north latitude, there is no sort of danger either above water or below it, and you may securely coast it within a quarter of a league of the land.

Continuing to coast for three leagues, you lose sight of the black soil, and discover a perfectly white beach, upon which are numerous sand hills, each of them bearing a plant, resembling the tamarisk, from two to three feet in height, and rendered conspicuous from afar by the whiteness of the sand. Here, at one third of a league from land, are twenty-three fathom water, and a stony bottom.

Coasting along two leagues further, you see a tongue of sand which advances about two leagues and a half into the sea; and upon a small eminence, about a league from the shore is a fortress. As you near the tongue of sand, two small rocks open upon you, three quarters of a league from the continent, and you may pass securely between them and the sand-bank, by taking care to steer nearer to the rocks than the land, on account of the eddy of water at two cables length from the extremity of the bank, over a rocky bottom about six feet deep.

South of the point is a large bay, from within which you see some ruins of buildings upon the beach; and when they bear

south-west there is no further risk. You will then shape your course towards those ruins, and may anchor safe from every wind, to the extent of a quarter of a league, in 30° 27′ 10″ north latitude. But you must weigh your anchor every twenty-four hours, to avoid the possibility of losing it in the great quantity of mud which forms the bottom.

Eight leagues east-north-east from the point of the sand-bank, is a ledge of rocks four or five leagues in circumference, covered by from three to thirteen feet of water. To the south of this dangerous ledge, and about two leagues and one third from it, is an island about forty feet high; and between the island and the ledge is a sandy bottom, where in case of necessity you may anchor in five fathom water, and be safe from every wind between north-west and east; but with every other wind it is most prudent to bear away.

The remainder of the west side of the gulph is unknown.

Concerning the East Coast of the Gulph, as far as 30° 35′ 26″ north latitude.

From Cape Tochera to Bengasi, this coast is one continued chain of mountains, about three leagues from the beach, the intermediate space being occupied by the sea-shore. You may coast along at the distance of a quarter of a league from the land; the bottom, for two leagues wide, is muddy and white. There is no danger along this coast except from two small rocks near Ptolometa, in 32° 40′ 8″ north latitude, where you may anchor to the east of them, and carry a cable across one of them.

The port of Bengasi is on the edge of this chain of mountains, in 32° 13′ 5″ north latitude, and may be known by a square fort which you leave on the left hand. Upon entering the port, you have upon the east, a Marabout and some palm trees; and to the south-west, upon point Giuliana, which is on your right as you go in, are also some palm trees. The entrance of this port is so difficult, that it should not be attempted without a pilot.

If you continue to navigate the gulph beyond Bengasi, you must steer two leagues wide of point Tajuni, on account of a reef of rocks which commences at point Giuliana, and runs as far as point Tajuni, five leagues from Bengasi. The whole of this part of the coast is low, and of a reddish colour. Having cleared the reef of rocks, you will see white land with three sand hills, and a ruined fort between the two sand hills which are most to the south-west. When you have left this ruined fort still more to the south-east, all danger from the reef ceases, and you may make sail towards the fort, and enter a bay, which is the excellent road of Tajuni. In approaching it you will see upon the right some trees and another fort; and when you have left this last to the south-west, you will have passed the rocky bottom, and will find in the remainder of the road only a sandy one.

When the ruined fort between the two sand hills above-mentioned is to the south-east of you, and you are one third of a league from the land, you will find the best place for anchoring to be lat. 31° 58′ north.

From Tajuni to Carcora the whole coast is white, and occasionally rises into sand

hills; and its line is frequently broken into capes and small bays. After coasting thirteen leagues, a precipitous promontory advances about two leagues into the sea; it is higher and whiter than any between Tajuni and Carcora, and announces the harbour of Carcora, which is in latitude 31° 17′ 6″ north, and fifteen leagues from the road of Tajuni. To enter the harbour you must run as near the cape as may be, and from it opens a capacious bay, forming the port of Carcora.

Four cables length to the south-west of the cape, and even with the surface of the water, is a rock over which the sea continually breaks; but if the wind is favourable, you may steer between it and the land.

This harbour, in 31° 17′ 6″ north latitude, is two leagues in circumference, and has every where five fathom water upon a hard sandy bottom; but the south-west wind is unfavourable to it. All the charts place Carcora eight leagues more to the north; but no Carcora is to be found there.

At the foot of this bay, towards the north, is a fresh water well of a round form, with an interior stair, by which you may descend

into it; and at every tenth step are Greek inscriptions cut in the stone. It is so deep, especially in hot weather, that in the month of September, it required about fifty yards of rope to reach the water.

Five leagues beyond Carcora are two old castles or forts a little way from the sea; and when they are to the south-east of you, the bottom begins to be even and white, under eleven or twelve fathom water. The water here is thick and troubled as at the mouth of a river; and if the wind blow from the south-east, it carries on board a great quantity of sulphureous dust. Four leagues more to the south, the water again becomes clear, and is eighteen fathom deep, though at no greater distance than that from the land; but after sailing three leagues further in the same deep water, you suddenly find only four fathom water, upon a clay bottom. The land for about two leagues along the coast is very black in summer, but covered with grass in winter, a circumstance which occurs in no other part of the gulph, either east or west.

Having passed this tract of land you will discover a white cape, and three considerable rocks to the west of it; and as you

approach, you will find a muddy bottom of sea-weed extending as far as the rocks. The cape at its extremity divides into two points, which with the rocks, form a good harbour; you may without danger pass between the rocks and the cape, are then safe from every kind of wind, and may throw your cable either over the rocks, or upon the land. Latitude 30° 35′ 26″ north.

To the south of the rocks is an even bottom from two to three leagues long, under four fathom water; and at the south end of it are two other rocks; but of them and of the remainder of the gulph nothing more is known.

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